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**The Cambridge Edition of the Poets**

EDITED BY

BLISS PERRY

— — —  
**WORDSWORTH**

BY

**ANDREW J. GEORGE**













THE  
COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH  
*Cambridge Edition*



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

LITERATURE is pure spirit, and hence its truths must be spiritually discerned, yet there are two avenues of approach which are likely to prove the most alluring and satisfactory to the student, — the chronological and that of correlation. Where the mind and art of a poet have developed naturally from the simple to the complex, the chronological order seems the most helpful and appropriate; but when we find midway in a poet's career work which is both history and prophecy, — work which reveals the method and spirit of the past and contains the potency of the future, — it may well serve as a point around which other poems are to be gathered, and the method of correlation will be found most suggestive.

It follows that the method of annotation in each of these cases should be different. In the chronological, the eye is upon the past, and the principle hitherto evolved by the poet is made use of in the treatment of each successive poem; while in the method of correlation the eye looks before and after in a study of those elements which may be considered as fundamental in the life and art of the poet. I have illustrated the one method in my selections from Milton, Burns, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and the other in "The Princess" and "Childe Harold." It has been said that as respects a man whom we never saw we are fortunate if we have, as means of knowing him, works revealing the various moods of his mind and emotions of his heart, portraits painted by great artists in a lucky hour of his youth and age, and friends who had the insight to know and were both able and willing to tell us the truth in regard to his character. In the case of Wordsworth we have all of these and there is no excuse for taking half views of him and his work.

The distinctive features of this edition are: the latest text adopted by the poet; the chronological order of the poems; the date of composition and that of publication of each poem; the Essays and Prefaces on Poetry written between 1800 and 1845; a body of notes which Wordsworth printed in his various editions; notes at the head of each poem, dictated by the poet himself late in life to Miss Fenwick, and known as the "I. F." notes; notes revealing the time, place, occasion, and circumstance, so far as can be ascertained, out of which each poem had its origin; bibliography of Wordsworth's works; a list of biographical and critical reviews.

Long and varied use of Wordsworth in school and college classes; frequent visits to the scenes associated with his work in the inspiring and recreating atmosphere of his beloved lake land; and association with those who knew him as a man and poet, have yielded me material which has proved of the highest value in the teaching of his poetry and the interesting period of political and literary history to which he belonged and in which he was so conspicuous a figure. These experi-

ences have been helpful in preparing this edition, which, it is hoped, will be found equally suited to the needs of the special student and the general reader.

It is to be regretted that the limits of this volume preclude any attempt at giving the interesting variants which the poet from time to time introduced into the text of the poems. These have been given with skill and care in the variorum editions of Professor Knight and Professor Dowden, and any one who cares for such details of workmanship should consult them there.

It hardly need be said that I am indebted to that noble band of disciples of the poet who have written with sympathy, insight, and illumination, upon the various aspects of his mind, art, and influence. One of the most distinguished of these disciples, Mr. Aubrey de Vere, took great delight in my devotion to the poet of his youth. From him, during an acquaintance of nearly a quarter of a century, I received invaluable sympathy and suggestion. On learning of my plan which is revealed in this volume, he wrote me, only shortly before his death, a letter which contained the following significant sentence: "More than anything else, a great and sound literature seems to be now the means of promoting divine truth."

It is not surprising that in many instances the date of composition given in the Fenwick notes is incorrect, owing to the fact that the poet dictated them in his old age and from memory. Many errors have been corrected by the use of Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals and the editions of the poet's works by Professor Dowden and Mr. Thomas Hutchinson; some dates are still conjectural.

In the matter of bibliography original sources have been followed as far as possible; but in several instances I have used the data of Professor Dowden and Mr. J. R. Tutin; this indebtedness is indicated by the terms (D) and (T).

A. J. G.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that the notes to this edition are biographical and critical, — an attempt to reveal how Wordsworth became the poet of plain living and high thinking, — it may be well to review the main events of his life and the distinctive achievement of his art. It will help us to understand what Emerson wrote of him in 1854: "It is very easy to see that to act so powerfully in this practical age, he needed, with all his Oriental abstraction, the indomitable vigour rooted in animal constitution, for which his countrymen are marked, otherwise he could not have resisted the deluge streams of their opinion with success. One would say he is the only man among them who has not in any point succumbed to their way of thinking, and has prevailed."

William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, April 7, 1770. The house in which he was born, a large substantial mansion, still stands, and is of interest because of the garden and terrace-walk in the rear associated with events related in "The Sparrow's Nest" and "The Prelude." His father, John Wordsworth, a solicitor, and law agent of the Earl of Lonsdale, was a descendant of an old family which belonged to the middle class and had settled in Penistone, Yorkshire, in the reign of Edward the Third. An interesting old oak chest or almy, now in the possession of the poet's grandchildren at The Stepping Stones, Ambleside, bears the pedigree carved by one of the family in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

The poet's mother (Anne Cookson) was the daughter of William Cookson, mercer, of Penrith. She was descended on her mother's side from an ancient family of Crackanthorpe, which, from the time of Edward the Third, had lived at Newbiggen Hall, Westmoreland. She married John Wordsworth at Penrith, February 5, 1766. Besides William, who was the second son, there were born at Cockermouth three sons, Richard, John, and Christopher, and one daughter, Dorothy.

Wordsworth's infancy and early boyhood were passed at Cockermouth, and with maternal relatives at Penrith. His teachers at this time were his mother, to whom he has paid a touching tribute in "The Prelude," and his father, who early taught him to commit to memory portions of the great English poets, the Rev. Mr. Gilbanks, of Cockermouth, and Dame Birkett, of Penrith. There was nothing in his character during these years that distinguished him in any way from other children in the family, unless it was the manifestation of that "indomitable vigour" which characterized him as a man. This manifested itself in such forms of will and temper as to cause his mother to remark that the only one of her five children about whose future she was anxious was William: "He will be remarkable either for good or for evil." Yet there were influences of Nature and his own home acting silently upon him thus early which later became his most cherished memories, and revealed how favored he had been in his birthplace and training.

Wordsworth's mother, the heart and hinge of all his learning and his loves, died in 1778, and the family was broken up. William and Richard, the eldest boys, were sent to the old school at Hawkshead. It is hardly necessary to review in detail the events of Wordsworth's life from this time until he meets Coleridge in 1795, as it is given with scrupulous regard for truth and with entire freedom from vanity in "The Prelude," by the only man who could describe them with certainty. All who would read his poetry as he

wished it to be read should have this poem by heart. Only the main events will be reviewed here.

The old school, situated in a quaint rural village, and surrounded by the unambitious loveliness of Nature in hill and dale, rivers, woods, and fields, maintained a healthy, sound simplicity of social and academic culture. Competition and high pressure were unknown; there were the greatest freedom and variety of mental and physical training. The boys, while studying mathematics and the classics under accomplished and sympathetic teachers, lived in the cottages of the dalesmen, and were cared for by the homely and motherly dames. When out of school they were left to themselves and their own modest pleasures. They rowed or skated on the lake, ranged the fells for woodcock, fished in brooks or pools hid among the mountains, practiced crag-climbing and raven-nesting, until "feverish with weary joints and beating minds" home and to bed they went. In reviewing these happy days Wordsworth found two great periods in his development at the hands of Nature clearly revealed: first, that of unconscious receptivity when life was sweet he knew not why; and the second, that of conscious intercourse with aspects sublime and fair of the external world. Of this experience he writes:—

I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataraet  
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite; a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.

His pastime and his happiness now began to grow in the substantial world of great books; but his reading was not that of a student with a definite aim, rather that of a lover of romance, a child. He read as chance and curiosity dictated. He says:—

What joy was mine! How often in the course  
Of those glad respites, though a soft west wind  
Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,  
For a whole day together, have I lain  
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmuring stream,  
On the hot stones, devouring as I read,  
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!  
Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,  
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,  
I to the sport betook myself again.

The healthy activities of these days at Hawkshead, when spontaneous wisdom was breathed by health, and truth by cheerfulness, begat

A race of real children; not too wise,  
Too learned, or too good; but wanton, fresh,  
And banded up and down by love and hate;  
Not unresentful where self-justified;  
Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest, shy;  
Mad at their sports like withered leaves in winds;  
Though doing wrong and suffering, and full oft  
Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight  
Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not  
In happiness to the happiest upon earth.

Before Wordsworth had completed his school days at Hawkshead his father died and the family was left in straitened circumstances owing to the fact that Sir James Lowther had borrowed nearly his entire savings and had refused to discharge the debt. Accordingly Dorothy was sent to live with maternal relatives at Penrith. Through the assistance of his uncles, William was enabled to enter St. John's College, Cambridge. Although he had looked forward with a boy's delight to this

Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,  
A northern villager,

yet after the first novelty of the place and the quaint customs wore off he was filled with disappointment. But he conformed to every outward requirement of the place and kept his homesickness to himself. Cambridge was at this time in the depths of intellectual sleep; enthusiasm was dead, and academic spirit was at a low ebb. Without stimulus to intellectual activity Wordsworth's thoughts were directed, first, quite unconsciously — as they had been previously with Nature — to the historic past as revealed in his environment. Of this he says: —

Imagination slept,  
And yet not utterly. I could not print  
Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps  
Of generations of illustrious men,  
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass  
Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept,  
Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old,  
That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.

Gradually he was aroused to the consciousness of the superficial religious and academic spirit of the place: —

Decency and Custom starving Truth,  
And blind Authority beating with his staff  
The child that might have led him; Emptiness  
Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth  
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Realizing that he was not for that place nor for that time, he sought the comradeship of the poets who had made the name of Cambridge famous in the literature of the English tongue; and the love of man began to rise in his heart. Thenceforth he had a world of his own about him, both of Nature and of man; he made it and it lived to him alone. It is needless to say that this slight of the means upon which his future worldly maintenance must depend caused anxiety to those interested in his progress. In his first vacations he found consolation for this in revisiting his old haunts at Hawkshead, and in the company of his sister and Mary Hutchinson at Penrith. It was at Hawkshead, after a night spent with his old schoolmates at a farmhouse among the hills, that there was revealed to him as to Burns in "The Vision," that he was set apart for holy services.

Magnificent  
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,  
Glorious as e'er I had beheld — in front,  
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,  
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,  
Grain-tintured, drenched in empyrean light;  
And in the meadows and the lower grounds  
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn —  
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds.

And labourers going forth to till the fields,  
 Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim  
 My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows  
 Were then made for me; bond unknown to me  
 Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,  
 A dedicated Spirit.

The first fruits of this dedication are to be seen in "An Evening Walk," begun at the time, dedicated to his sister, and given to the world in 1793. Until this time he had written only a few school poems.

In his last college vacation he visited the Alps with a college friend, Robert Jones, of Wales, at a time when the rumblings of the Revolution in France were first heard in England. Europe was then thrilled with joy, and human nature seemed rejoicing in a new birth. They landed at Calais on the day when Louis XIV. swore fidelity to the new Constitution. They then made their way southward rejoicing with the enthusiastic bands of delegates sent from Marseilles to the Federation. They visited the Grand Chartreuse, spent several weeks at the Swiss and Italian lakes, and crossed the Simplon. On their return they met the —

Brabant armies on the fret  
 For battle in the cause of liberty.

This journey aroused and fed his imagination by association with the grander aspects of Nature than he had viewed in England, but it also awoke a new sentiment within him, that Revolutionary fervor which was to influence his life work. The immediate results of this became evident to his friends in the "Descriptive Sketches;" these, expanded and enriched, may now be read in the sixth book of "The Prelude." The first distinctive notes in the great movement of the return to Nature, of which Wordsworth and Coleridge were to be the leaders, are to be heard in these sketches.

In 1791 Wordsworth took his degree of B. A. After visiting his sister at Farnett Rectory, where she was living with her uncle and conducting a little school, with no settled plan as to the future, but with a passion for travel, he repaired to London. Here he played the idler; mingled with all sorts and conditions of men, and saw human nature in those extremes of luxury and poverty which every great city affords. He became impressed with the power of the great metropolis over the fortunes of men and nations: —

Fount of my country's destiny and the world's,  
 as he calls it.

After several months in London he visited his friend Jones in Wales. While there he became impressed with the picturesque scenery, the historical and legendary associations of the ancient principality, the splendor of the vale of Clwyd, the heights of Snowdon, Menai and her Druids, and the windings of the Dee.

His guardians now became more troubled about him, so he made plans to visit France and study the language in order to fit himself for a tutor; he would thus be able to continue his roving life and visit the country which had aroused his Revolutionary spirit. Accordingly he set out for Orleans, but delayed in Paris, where he

Saw the Revolutionary Power  
 Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms.

He did not remain long at Orleans, but went to Blois, where he became associated with that remarkable philosopher and republican general, Michael Beaupuy.

By birth he ranked  
 With the most noble, but unto the poor  
 Among mankind he was in service bound,  
 As by some tie invisible, oaths professed  
 To a religious order. Man he loved  
 As man ; and, to the mean and the obscure,  
 And all the homely in their homely works,  
 Transferred a courtesy which had no air  
 Of condescension ; but did rather seem  
 A passion and a gallantry, like that  
 Which he, a soldier in his idler day,  
 Had paid to woman.

Many were their walks and talks together beside the Loire. They discussed the principles of civil rights which must be the foundation of every republican government. In July, 1792, Beaupuy left Blois for service with his regiment, and Wordsworth returned to Orleans, where he remained during the September Massacres ; not dismayed by these, he believed in the patriots' cause and hastened to Paris, where amid the tumult and the tragedy of those days his enthusiasm for the cause of liberty led him to think of offering himself as a leader. Fortunately before such a plan could be put in operation — a plan in which he would doubtless have perished --- his funds gave out and he was obliged to return to England.

While it is evident that Wordsworth's relatives distrusted him, yet he found comfort and inspiration in the society of the dear sister from whom he had been separated so long. So on his return from France with his future career still unsettled he sought her companionship at Farncombe, and set about the publication of "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches." While the *Monthly Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, and *Blackwood's* could see in this work only subjects for clumsy satire and vulgar rebuff, saying : "Must eternal changes be rung on nodding forests, and brooding clouds, and cells and dells, and dingles ?" Coleridge, not yet out of the University, uttered the most significant literary prophecy and acute literary criticism to be found in our language. He says : "During the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication, entitled 'Descriptive Sketches ;' and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is a harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating."

Wordsworth was now at the height of his republican ardor, and on hearing of the excitement in London over negro emancipation and the Revolution, he wrote : "I disapprove of monarchical and aristocratical governments however modified. Hereditary distinctions and privileged orders of every species, I think, must necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement." At this time, too, he wrote that remarkable pamphlet in reply to the avowal of political principles by the Bishop of Landaff. He pleaded with lofty eloquence and patriotic fervor for universal education to be followed by universal suffrage, and for a consideration of the great questions of how the general welfare of a nation was to be promoted - questions which at the present time in England are still uppermost.

In this unsettled condition of mind he was still more deeply agitated by the action of



England in preparing to make war against France in 1793. At this time he was rambling in the Isle of Wight with his friend, William Calvert, of Windybrow, Keswick. How he felt is revealed by the following:—

When the proud fleet that bears the red-cross flag  
In that unworthy service was prepared  
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,  
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;  
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner  
Through a whole month of calm and glassy days  
In that delightful island which protects  
Their place of convocation; there I heard,  
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,  
A monitory sound that never failed,—  
The sunset cannon. While the orb went down  
In the tranquillity of nature, came  
That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by me  
Without a spirit overcast by dark  
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,  
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

Soon affairs in France assumed an aspect which was the greatest disappointment of his life. For—

now, become oppressors in their turn,  
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-defence  
For one of conquest, losing sight of all  
Which they had struggled for: up mounted now,  
Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,  
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,  
With anger vexed, with disappointment sore.

As a result of the shock he began that intellectual quest to determine the origin, impulses, motives, and obligations which caused such actions; demanding formal proof, he lost those feelings of the heart which had been his safest guides; and at last yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,  
This the soul's last and lowest ebb.

Still undecided as to whether he should choose the Church, the Bar, or literary work for his occupation, he wandered with his friend Jones in Wales, with his sister in the lake country, and visited the Speddings and Calverts at Keswick. While waiting at Keswick for a reply to a proposition he had made for literary work on a magazine, Raisley Calvert became ill, and he volunteered to attend him as companion and nurse. Calvert had become interested in Wordsworth's ideals, and saw that what was needed was leisure in which they might mature. He planned to spend the winter of 1794-5 with Wordsworth in Lisbon, but his health failed so rapidly that this became impossible, and he died early in 1795. He had intimated to Wordsworth that he intended to leave him a small legacy, but when the will was opened it was found that the sum of £900 had been bequeathed him. This generous act opened out a course for the young poet, as he has recorded in "The Prelude" and the sonnet to Calvert. He needed no longer to worry about a profession, and, best of all, he could now be restored to the society of Dorothy. By her ministrations he was able to throw off the unnatural burden of analytical research under which he had fallen.

Then it was —  
 Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good! —  
 That the beloved Sister in whose sight  
 Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice  
 Of sudden admonition — like a brook  
 That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now  
 Is seen, heard, felt and caught at every turn,  
 Companion never lost through many a league —  
 Maintained for me a saving intercourse  
 With my true self; for, though bedimmed and changed  
 Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed  
 Than as a clouded and a waning moon:  
 She whispered still that brightness would return,  
 She, in the midst of all, preserved me still  
 A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,  
 And that alone, my office upon earth.

The following from one of Dorothy's letters at this time will reveal how lonely the brother must have been in his perplexity. She writes: "The fortunate brother of mine happens to be no favourite with any of his near relations except his brothers, by whom he is adored, I mean John and Christopher." The former was at sea, the latter at Cambridge.

With the proceeds of Calvert's legacy the dreams of the two enthusiasts about beginning life together were realized, and they settled at Racedown Lodge, Dorsetshire, in the summer of 1795. The old farmhouse was delightfully situated in a retired part of the country reached by post only once a week. Here they spent their time in reading, writing, gardening, communing with themselves, with Nature and books. The period of Wordsworth's recovery from the tyranny of intellectual research was here completed, and pessimism forever cast aside, by the creation of that gruesome tragedy, "The Borderers," the only production of these days at Racedown. While this is of little value as poetry, it is most significant as biography. Through the creation of the philosophical villain Oswald, who is moved by "the motive hunting of a motiveless malignity," Wordsworth revealed what was the inevitable outcome of Godwin's revolutionary scheme of *Political Justice* — a scheme that in the interest of reason would free man from all the laws, social and moral, upon which society is founded.

With the completion of "The Borderers" the great formative period of Wordsworth's life is at an end, and the first creative period begins. Coleridge had but recently settled at Nether Stowey, and on hearing that the author of "Descriptive Sketches" was so near, took an early opportunity (in June) of visiting him. Dorothy tells us "the first thing that was read on that occasion was 'The Ruined Cottage' with which Coleridge was so much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy, 'Osorio.' The next morning William read his tragedy, 'The Borderers.'"

That this was a clear case of love at first sight is shown by the letters written to their friends at this time. Dorothy writes: "You had a great loss in not seeing Coleridge. He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind, and spirit. . . . He has more of 'the poet's eye in fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows and an overhanging forehead." Coleridge in his account of this visit says: "I speak with heartfelt sincerity, and, I think, unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel myself a little man by his side." When the Wordsworths returned this visit and went to Nether Stowey, Coleridge gives this beautiful picture of Dorothy: "W. and his exquisite sister are with me. She is a woman indeed! in mind and heart; for her person is

such that if you expected to see a pretty woman, you would think her rather ordinary ; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty ! but her manners are simple, ardent, impressive. In every motion her most innocent soul outbeams so brightly, that who saw her would say : —

‘ Guilt was a thing impossible to her.’

Her information various. Her eye watchful in minutest observation of nature ; and her taste a perfect electrometer.” Wordsworth wrote, “ Coleridge is the most *wonderful* man I ever met.”

After reading the expressions of delight of these two young men in each other, we are not surprised that a month later the Wordsworths removed to Alfoxden, near Nether Stowey, Somersetshire, where Coleridge resided.

The poets rambled over the Quantock Hills and held high communion. During one of these excursions, feeling the need of money, they planned a joint production for the *New Monthly Magazine*. They set about the work in earnest, and selected as a subject the “ Ancyent Marinere,” founded upon a dream of one of Coleridge’s friends. Coleridge supplied most of the incidents and almost all the lines. Wordsworth contributed the incident of the killing of the albatross, and a few of the lines. They soon found that their methods did not harmonize, and the “ Marinere ” was left to Coleridge, while Wordsworth wrote upon the common incidents of everyday life. When the “ Marinere ” was finished Wordsworth had so many pieces ready that they concluded to publish a joint volume, and this they did under the title *Lyrical Ballads*. The volume contained twenty-three poems, four by Coleridge and the remainder by Wordsworth.

In the manuscript notes which Wordsworth left we find this record : —

“ In the autumn of 1797, Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon with a view to visit Linton and the Valley of Stones near to it ; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine*. Accordingly, we set off, and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet ; and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the ‘ Ancient Mariner ’ founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge’s invention, but certain parts I suggested ; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke’s *Voyages*, a day or two before, that while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. ‘ Suppose,’ said I, ‘ you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.’ The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular, —

‘ And listened like a three years’ child :  
The Mariner had his will.’

These trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, —

‘ And thou art long and lank, and brown  
As is the ribbed sea-sand,’ —

slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. . . . The ‘ Ancient Mariner ’ grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds; and we began to think of a volume which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects.”

An interesting subject for consideration in connection with the study of literature would be the work poets have done in developing patriotism by showing how much stronger and deeper is the love of country when thus associated with the love of home with its simple and substantial comforts and its endearments of natural associations, — rivers, woods and hills, forests, lakes and vales: and also, how by revealing the beauty of places in a country they have made it more beloved. There is fascinating wandering in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and England for one who wishes to read such poetry in the scenes of its birth, and such wandering is the very best lesson in political as well as literary history.

The region of Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, with a wealth of natural beauty, forest and hills, cultivated farms, open sea prospect, and simple life, was an ideal place for the creation of such poetry as these enthusiasts on man, on Nature, and on human life desired to give to the world. In Dorothy’s letters and journal we have the best of guides in these delightful retreats. She writes: “There is everything here, — sea, woods, wild as fancy ever painted, brooks, clear and pebbly as in Cumberland; villages romantic . . . the deer dwell here and sheep, so that we have a living prospect.” While the two poets were murmuring near the running brooks a music sweeter than their own, and Dorothy was beginning those inimitable Journals which have become an essential part of the history of these and later days, somewhat of a sensation was caused in the quiet community of Stowey by the advent there of a young republican by the name of Thelwall, with whom Coleridge had some correspondence. When he arrived Coleridge was with the Wordsworths; and he writes to his wife: “So after sleeping at Coleridge’s cot, Sara and I went to Alfoxden in time enough to call Samuel and Wordsworth up to breakfast.”

Coleridge says of Thelwall (*Table-Talk*, July, 1820): “We were once sitting in a beautiful recess in the Quantocks, when I said to him, ‘Citizen John, this is a fine place to talk treason in!’ ‘Nay, Citizen Samuel,’ he replied, ‘it is rather a place to make a man forget that there is any necessity for treason.’”

Coleridge’s lectures and preaching and Wordsworth’s secluded life with his sister, had, even before the arrival of Thelwall, aroused the suspicions of the good people. They thought Wordsworth a smuggler, a conjurer, and as he was “so silent and dark,” a French Jacobin. Poole was blamed for harboring such suspects (it was through Poole that Wordsworth secured Alfoxden), and now a government spy was sent down to watch their movements. The *Anti-Jacobin* published the following: —

“ Thelwall and ye that lecture as ye go,  
And for your pains get pelted,  
Praise Lepaux!  
And ye five other wandering bards that move  
In sweet accord of harmony and love.

C—dge, and S—th—y, L—d and L—b, and Co.,  
Tune all your mystic harps to praise  
Lepaux."

Coleridge, writing to Cottle of the experience of Wordsworth, says: "Whether we shall be able to procure him a house and furniture near Stowey we know not, and yet we must; for the hills, and the woods, and the streams, and the sea, and the shores, would break forth into reproaches against us, if we did not strain every nerve to keep their poet among them."

The *Lyrical Ballads* were rapidly taking shape. Wordsworth, Dorothy, and Coleridge had decided to visit Germany to study the language, and the thought of breaking up the Elysian repose among the Quantocks throws the poet into one of his pensive moods, in which the affections gently lead him on. In "The Nightingale," Coleridge returns "to his love and his nest," and finds joy in the thoughts that spring from the simple domestic affections, from the delightful associations with man and Nature in the sylvan retreats of the land he loved.

Wordsworth thus alludes to this period: —

That summer, under whose indulgent skies  
Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved  
Uncheck'd, or loitered 'mid her sylvan combs,  
Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,  
Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient Man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes  
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;  
And I, associate with such labour, steeped  
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,  
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was found,  
After the perils of his moonlight ride,  
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate  
In misery near the miserable Thorn.

The *Lyrical Ballads* were published in September by Cottle anonymously. Only four poems were by Coleridge, the remainder by Wordsworth.

Before the reviewers had brought their guns to bear upon the frail craft of the *Lyrical Ballads*, the two poets and Dorothy, having left Mrs. Coleridge and the children with Poole, departed for Germany, where they soon received the cheerful news from Sara that "the *Lyrical Ballads* are not liked at all by any." And yet through the quiet revolution in poetic taste which this little volume wrought, the Bastile of the old poetic tyranny was destined to fall to the ground.

"So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797 and 1798," says Edmund Gosse, "that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close of the latter year, we should, indeed, have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especially of Wordsworth's; but the direction taken by literature would scarcely have been modified in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflammatory minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced full-blown and perfect the exquisite new flower of romantic poetry."

Soon Coleridge left the Wordsworths for Ratzeburg, where he remained during the winter, while they went to the old imperial town of Goslar, where, though cold and homesick, Wordsworth wrote his inimitable poems on English girlhood. Wordsworth sent these poems to Coleridge, who, while thinking of the future and hoping that their

homes would be in the same neighborhood, wrote: "Whenever I spring forward into the future with noble affections, I always alight by your side."

In the spring of 1799 the Wordsworths set out for home, and the poet voiced their feelings in the first lines of "The Prelude." They went to visit their friends the Hutchinsons at Sockburn, and when Coleridge returned in June of this year he visited them there. On the conclusion of this visit, Cottle, Coleridge, and Wordsworth began a tour of the lake country. Cottle left the party at Greta Bridge, and they were then joined by Wordsworth's brother John. They were especially delighted with Grasmere, and as Wordsworth was ready to begin housekeeping with his sister, he rented Dove Cottage at Pavement End and took up his abode there in December. The first book of "The Recluse," entitled "Home at Grasmere," gives a vivid picture of the life at Dove Cottage.

The second and greatest creative period in Wordsworth's work begins with the settlement at Grasmere. From this time the external events of his life become of less importance, and those subtle and elemental forces within, "calm pleasures and majestic pains," which enabled him to reach the mount of vision, are of first interest. These must be seen in the history of the poems created here, and in those aspects of Nature and man which they reflect. In this shy retreat of the mountains dedicated to the genius of Solitude he attained that view of life as clear and true, as courageous and steadfast, as joyous and hopeful, as is to be found anywhere in our literature. In his walks with Dorothy and the sailor brother, and, later — when the circle became widened — with Mary and Sara Hutchinson, Coleridge, Lamb, Scott, and Sir Humphrey Davy, he revealed the rich harvest of the time in verse of humble theme but noble thought. To one familiar with this verse every lake and tarn, fellside and mountain height, beck and ghyll, from Penrith to Morecambe Bay, from Cockermouth to the Duddon Sands, is luminous with —

the gleam,  
The light, that never was, on sea or land,  
The consecration and the poet's dream.

Here "The Recluse," the first half of "The Excursion," "The Prelude," and those revolutionary Prefaces, so vigorous in critical insight and sound in reflective wisdom upon the nature of Poetic Diction, were written. These reveal his devotion to Nature, to man, and to his art, and are literary masterpieces essentially Wordsworthian.

Of the long poems, "The Prelude" is probably the most read and "The Excursion" the most talked about. "The Prelude" is a sustained exercise of memory, an attempt to recapture something of the first fine careless rapture which makes the life of that healthy boy a continuous poem. Here the past and the present are brought to act upon each other in such a way as to cause the pulses of his being to beat anew; consciousness of poetic power is awakened, and hymns to Nature are poured forth. In "The Excursion," while still paying tribute to Nature, Wordsworth seeks light upon the great problems of the constitution and powers of the mind of man, the haunt and main region of his song. Illumination comes to him, in those lonely vigils of contemplation, on the simple yet surprising and strange perceptions and emotions of his own mind and heart. Gems of the idyll, ode, and proverb lie thickly scattered in the pages of "The Excursion." While by one he may be called philosophical, by another psychological, and by a third mystical, yet everywhere he has the patience, the love of truth, and the reverence of the scientific observer. While he is thus the central figure in the poem, it is not because he gives thanks that he is not as other men are, but because he must seek authentic revelations in his own experience. He is always mindful of the fact that the humblest dalesman is rich

in revelations for the wisest philosopher, could he but enter into his world. Hence he has conceived of characters in humble life with a purity, delicacy, insight, and sympathy achieved by no other poet. The Pedlar, Michael, and the Leechgatherer have become through him heroes of history. In his treatment of such characters we have a complete illustration of what he meant by that famous sentence in his Preface of 1800: "That the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling." If one would understand the secret of the shorter poems one should ponder over these two sources of poetic power — "The Prelude" and "The Excursion." James Russell Lowell says: "Wordsworth has won for himself a secure immortality by a depth of intuition which makes only the best minds at their best hours worthy, or indeed capable, of his companionship, and by a homely sincerity of human sympathy which reaches the humblest heart. Our language owes him gratitude for the habitual purity and abstinence of his style, and we who speak it, for having emboldened us to take delight in simple things, and to trust ourselves to our own instincts."

When in 1800 a second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* was published, somewhat enlarged, it contained the famous Preface which set forth his theory of poetry in general and of his own poetry in particular; this called down upon him a storm of abuse second only to that caused by the poems themselves. From this time until 1815 neglect, obloquy, ridicule, and disparagement followed his work. It is to these years that we owe his fearless, if not altogether prudent, Apologies. In 1802 the first Preface was enlarged, and an Appendix on "Poetic Diction" added. These were repeated in successive editions of his poems until 1815, when, in the edition of that year, the first volume contained a new preface and a supplementary essay of the poetry of the last two centuries; while at the close of the second volume was placed the first Preface and the Appendix on "Poetic Diction." These Prefaces were changed by alterations, insertions, and omissions, in the various editions until they received their last revision in 1845.

While it is true that Wordsworth silenced his opponents by his poems rather than by his Prefaces, the two are so inter-related that the history of one is the history of the other. Of no artist can it be more truly said than of Wordsworth that he builded better than he knew. Artists cannot explain the secret of their art, and yet they can at times reveal to us much that is helpful to an appreciation of their work. Every artist brings into the world of art a new thing — his own personality — and consequently he must create the taste by which he is to be judged. In these Prefaces we have the principles which constitute the foundation of inductive criticism clearly and forcefully revealed; the fundamental of these is that —

You must love him ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

If they had been productive in nothing else than stimulating Coleridge to write those noble chapters in the *Biographia Literaria*, in review of the theory they set forth, they would have justified themselves.

The great satisfaction which came to Wordsworth from his friendship with Coleridge was that he was understood; this helped him to endure the public ridicule of many long years. Nothing in the history of Coleridge's critical genius better illustrates the unerring precision with which he discerned the elements of greatness where to the ordinary mind there seemed to be only the commonplace. Witness the marvelously subtle skill in preparing the way for his final masterly tribute to the genius and work of his friend — the noblest tribute yet written by any English critic — by first discriminating between Fancy

and Imagination, and then revealing the true nature of poetry, where he says: "Finally, good sense is the body of poetic genius, fancy its drapery, motion its life, and imagination the soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole." He then apparently assents to the most obvious accusations of the Reviewers, only to rise at last to the heights of his great argument, showing step by step how misguided they have been, and concluding with those six fundamentals which entitle Wordsworth to poetic greatness.

The only events of importance in Wordsworth's external life during these Grasmere days were his marriage in 1802 to Mary Hutchinson, the friendship with Sir George Beaumont begun in 1803, and the death of his brother John in 1805. By his marriage to the friend of his youth the home circle was enriched by the presence and devotion of

A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

In the atmosphere of serene domestic sweetness grew that poetry full of modesty and strength, of valiant human-heartedness, and homely spiritual truth; a poetry which makes common cause with all that is true to the kindred points of heaven and home. Between 1803 and 1808 four children were born to him and the little cottage became too small for the family. In 1808 he moved to Allan Bank across the lake and under the shadow of Silver How. Here "The Excursion" was completed. It was during his residence at Allan Bank that the estrangement with Coleridge took place — an estrangement both wicked and cruel, for which neither poet was in the least to be blamed. By it that idyllic friendship begun when they "wanton'd in wild poesy" among the Quantocks was broken up. The world can never know the full significance of that joyous and radiant comradeship. "The reciprocal influence of these two ardent young enthusiasts, the wizard fascination of the dreamer of dreams, playing against the healing calm of the child of the mountains, can never be completely revealed." It is as significant as it is pathetic that the close of the great creative period in the life of each poet is coincident with this breach.

In 1811 the parsonage opposite the church became his home, and here the poet's life was saddened by the death of two of his children. In 1813 he removed to his favorite and final abode, Rydal Mount.

The sun of Wordsworth's morning of inspiration, which rose in symbolic glory over the heights at Hawkshead, had reached its meridian and was declining towards the west to set in that evening of extraordinary splendor and beauty witnessed at Rydal Mount. The twilight of his song was rich in "pontific purple and dark harvest gold." The association at Rydal with sympathetic and appreciative friends, Miss Fenwick, Dr. Arnold, Professor Wilson, Hartley Coleridge, and F. W. Faber; his travels on the Continent and in Scotland, and his visits to Coleorton; his receptions in London with Gladstone, Rogers, and Crabb Robinson, when he met that devoted band of young disciples; his evenings at Fox How when he discoursed so eloquently on the great English poets; his reception of young and old, rich and poor in feast and merrymaking on his birthdays, and his solitude and meditation in his familiar haunts among the hills he loved, could not fail to call forth something of the glow and gladness of youth, the pathos and power of maturity. It was such association and the consciousness of a lofty and consecrated purpose in all he had written that enabled him to withstand the pitiless storm of abuse which beat upon him from the critical reviews, and inspired him to sing: —



For thus I live remote  
 From evil speaking ; rancour never sought  
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.  
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
 Smooth passion, smooth discourse and joyous thought.

In his calm assurance that time would deal justly with all things great and small he quieted the fears of his disciples who became anxious about the future of his poems. He writes: "Trouble not yourself upon their present reception ; of what moment is that compared with what I trust is their destiny ? — to console the afflicted ; to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier ; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and, therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous." Honor now came to him from sources which attested how potent his influence had become.

Blessings be with them — and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares, —  
 The Poets - who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !  
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs ;  
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

Thus wrote Wordsworth in 1805, and long and patiently did he wait for the answer to his prayer. At last, in the summer of 1839, he was permitted to realize that for which he had labored so assiduously and prayed so earnestly, when, by the foremost University of his land and the world, he was honored as one of the chief glories of English poetry and the greatest name since Milton. Keble, the professor of Poetry in the University, introduced him to the Vice Chancellor as being "one who had shed a celestial light upon the affections, the occupations, and the piety of the poor." The ovation which he received was such as had never been witnessed there before, except upon the occasion of the visit of the Duke of Wellington. The long battle had been patiently and courageously fought, and victory was at length achieved. Of this victory the Rev. Frederick Robertson says: —

"It was my lot, during a short university career, to witness a transition and a reaction, or revulsion, of public feeling with regard to two great men. The first of these was Arnold of Rugby; the second, Wordsworth. When he came forward to receive his honorary degree, scarcely had his name been pronounced than from three thousand voices at once there broke forth a burst of applause echoed and taken up again and again. There were young eyes then filled with an emotion of which they had no need to be ashamed; there were hearts beating with the proud feeling of triumph that at last the world had recognized the merit of the man they had loved so long and acknowledged as their teacher."

In 1842 there was bestowed on him an annuity of £300 a year from the Civil List for distinguished work in the field of literature.

In 1843 a still greater honor was conferred upon him at the hands of the young Queen. He was urged to accept the Laureateship, but gratefully and respectfully declined, as he considered that his years unfitted him for the discharge of its duties. He was then in his seventy-fourth year. This brought a letter from the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, urging his acceptance of the appointment, saying, "As the Queen can select for this honourable appointment no one whose claims for respect and honour, on account of eminence as a poet, can be placed in competition with you, I trust that you will no longer

hesitate to accept it. There is but one unanimous feeling on the part of all who have heard of the proposal.

"The offer was made not for the purpose of imposing upon you any onerous task or disagreeable duties, but in order to pay you that tribute of respect which is justly due to the first of living poets."

This letter removed his scruples, and the laurel wreath was placed upon the brows "of him who uttered nothing base." He produced but little poetry after this date ; but there is one poem, written in 1846 upon the fly-leaf of a gift copy of his poems, presented to the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, which is of special interest as connected with his Laureateship.

Deign, Sovereign Mistress ! to accept a lay,  
No Laureate offering of elaborate art ;  
But salutation, taking its glad way  
From deep recesses of a loyal heart.

Queen, wife, and mother ! may all-judging Heaven  
Shower with a bounteous hand on thee and thine  
Felicity, that only can be given  
On earth to goodness blessed by grace divine.

Lady ! devoutly honoured and beloved  
Through every realm confided to thy sway ;  
May'st thou pursue thy course by God approved,  
And he will teach thy people to obey.

As thou art wont thy sovereignty adorn  
With woman's gentleness, yet firm and staid ;  
So shall that earthly crown thy brows have worn  
Be changed to one whose glory cannot fade.

And now, by duty urged, I lay this book  
Before thy Majesty in humble trust,  
That on its simplest pages thou wilt look  
With a benign indulgence, more than just.

Nor wilt thou blame an aged poet's prayer,  
That, issuing hence, may steal into thy mind,  
Some solace under weight of royal care,  
Or grief, the inheritance of human kind.

For know we not that from celestial spheres  
When time was young an inspiration came,  
(O were it mine ! ) to hallow saddest tears  
And help life onward in its noblest aim ?

W. W.

RYDAL MOUNT, 9th *January*, 1846.

The death of the beloved daughter, Dora, in July, 1847, so saddened his declining years that he never again retouched his harp. His mission was completed. The bright dream of his boyhood was fulfilled ; and that spirit singled out for holy services, after the discipline of sadness and suffering, entered into its rest.

His body lies, as he had requested, in the churchyard at Grasmere, in the bosom of that dear vale where he had lived and loved and sung ; surrounded by the dalesmen whom he

honored ; beneath the shade of those yews planted by his own hands, in sound of Rotha murmuring her plaintive strain that —

few or none  
Hear her voice right now he is gone.

While round about in phalanx firm stand the mountains old, faithful guardians of the sacred spot. Earth has no more fitting resting-place for the dust of William Wordsworth.

Plain is the stone that marks the Poet's rest ;  
Not marble worked beneath Italian skies —  
A grey slate headstone tells where Wordsworth lies,  
Cleft from the native hills he loved the best.  
No heavier thing upon his gentle breast  
Than turf starred o'er in spring with daisy eyes.  
Nor richer music makes him lullabies  
Than Rotha fresh from yonder mountain crest.  
His name, his date, the years he lived to sing,  
Are deep incised and eloquently terse ;  
But Fancy hears the graver's hammer ring,  
And sees mid lines of much remembered verse  
These words in gold beneath his title wrought —  
" Singer of Humble Themes and Noble Thought." <sup>1</sup>

There was but one thing more which his countrymen could do for him, and this was not long left undone, for in the Venerable Abbey, surrounded by the memorials of Keble, Arnold, Kingsley, and Maurice, may be seen the life-size statue of the poet in white marble ; he is represented seated in the attitude of contemplation, the characteristic of all his portraits being thus strikingly reproduced in the marble. Underneath are engraved the words above quoted, " Blessings be with them and eternal praise," etc.

But perhaps the most significant tribute to his worth as a man and poet is the medallion in Grasmere Church erected by his friends and neighbors. It bears the following inscription: —

TO THE MEMORY OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH,  
A TRUE PHILOSOPHER AND POET,  
WHO BY THE SPECIAL GIFT AND CALLING OF  
ALMIGHTY GOD,  
WHETHER HE DISCOURSED ON MAN OR NATURE,  
FAILED NOT TO LIFT UP THE HEART  
TO HOLY THINGS,  
TIRED NOT OF MAINTAINING THE CAUSE  
OF THE POOR AND SIMPLE:  
AND SO IN PERILOUS TIMES WAS RAISED UP  
TO BE A CHIEF MINISTER  
NOT ONLY OF NOBLEST POESY,  
BUT OF HIGH AND SACRED TRUTH.  
THIS MEMORIAL  
IS PLACED HERE BY HIS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS  
IN TESTIMONY OF  
RESPECT, AFFECTION, AND GRATITUDE.  
ANNO 1851.

<sup>1</sup> H. D. Rawnsley.

If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,  
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,  
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content : —  
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,  
(Visible though they be to half the earth,  
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)  
Are yet of no diviner origin,  
No purer essence, than the one that burns,  
Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge  
Of some dark mountain ; or than those which seem  
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,  
Among the branches of the leafless trees.  
All are the undying offspring of one Sire :  
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,  
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content.



# WORDSWORTH'S POETICAL WORKS

## LINES

WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT  
HAWKSHEAD, ANNO ÆTATIS 14

1785. 1850

"AND has the Sun his flaming chariot  
driven  
Two hundred times around the ring of  
heaven,  
Since Science first, with all her sacred  
train,  
Beneath yon roof began her heavenly  
reign?  
While thus I mused, methought, before  
mine eyes,  
The Power of EDUCATION seemed to rise;  
Not she whose rigid precepts trained the boy  
Dead to the sense of every finer joy;  
Nor that vile wretch who bade the tender  
age  
Spurn Reason's law and humour Passion's  
rage;  
But she who trains the generous British  
youth  
In the bright paths of fair majestic Truth:  
Emerging slow from Academus' grove  
In heavenly majesty she seemed to move.  
Stern was her forehead, but a smile serene  
'Softened the terrors of her awful mien.'  
Close at her side were all the powers, de-  
signed  
To curb, exalt, reform the tender mind:  
With panting breast, now pale as winter  
snows,  
Now flushed as Hebe, Emulation rose;  
Shame followed after with reverted eye,  
And hue far deeper than the Tyrian dye;  
Last Industry appeared with steady pace,  
A smile sat beaming on her pensive face.  
I gazed upon the visionary train,  
Threw back my eyes, returned, and gazed  
again.  
When lo! the heavenly goddess thus began,  
Through all my frame the pleasing accents  
ran.

"When Superstition left the golden light  
And fled indignant to the shades of night;  
When pure Religion reared the peaceful  
breast  
And lulled the warring passions into rest,  
Drove far away the savage thoughts that  
roll  
In the dark mansions of the bigot's soul,  
Enlivening Hope displayed her cheerful ray,  
And beamed on Britain's sons a brighter day;  
So when on Ocean's face the storm subsides,  
Hushed are the winds and silent are the  
tides;  
The God of day, in all the pomp of light,  
Moves through the vault of heaven, and dis-  
sipates the night;  
Wide o'er the main a trembling lustre  
plays,  
The glittering waves reflect the dazzling  
blaze.  
Science with joy saw Superstition fly  
Before the lustre of Religion's eye;  
With rapture she beheld Britannia smile,  
Clapped her strong wings, and sought the  
cheerful isle,  
The shades of night no more the soul in-  
volve,  
She sheds her beam, and, lo! the shades  
dissolve;  
No jarring monks, to gloomy cell confined,  
With mazy rules perplex the weary mind;  
No shadowy forms entice the soul aside,  
Secure she walks, Philosophy her guide.  
Britain, who long her warriors had adored,  
And deemed all merit centred in the sword;  
Britain, who thought to stain the field was  
fame,  
Now honoured Edward's less than Bacon's  
name.  
Her sons no more in listed fields advance  
To ride the ring, or toss the beamy lance;  
No longer steel their indurated hearts  
To the mild influence of the finer arts;  
Quick to the secret grotto they retire  
To court majestic truth, or wake the golden  
lyre;

By generous Emulation taught to rise,  
The seats of learning brave the distant  
skies.

Then noble Sandys, inspired with great de-  
sign,

Reared Hawkshead's happy roof, and called  
it mine.

There have I loved to show the tender age  
The golden precepts of the classic page;  
To lead the mind to those Elysian plains  
Where, throned in gold, immortal Science  
reigns; 70

Fair to the view is sacred Truth displayed,  
In all the majesty of light arrayed,  
To teach, on rapid wings, the curious soul  
To roam from heaven to heaven, from pole  
to pole,

From thence to search the mystic cause of  
things

And follow Nature to her secret springs;  
Nor less to guide the fluctuating youth  
Firm in the sacred paths of moral truth,  
To regulate the mind's disordered frame,  
And quench the passions kindling into  
flame; 80

The glimmering fires of Virtue to enlarge,  
And purge from Vice's dross my tender  
charge.

Oft have I said, the paths of Fame pursue,  
And all that Virtue dictates, dare to do;  
Go to the world, peruse the book of man,  
And learn from thence thy own defects to  
scan;

Severely honest, break no plighted trust,  
But coldly rest not here — be more than  
just;

Join to the rigours of the sires of Rome  
The gentler manners of the private dome;  
When Virtue weeps in agony of woe, 91  
Teach from the heart the tender tear to  
flow;

If Pleasure's soothing song thy soul en-  
tice,

Or all the gaudy pomp of splendid Vice,  
Arise superior to the Siren's power,  
The wretch, the short-lived vision of an  
hour;

Soon fades her cheek, her blushing beauties  
fly,

As fades the chequered bow that paints the  
sky.

So shall thy sire, whilst hope his breast  
inspires,  
And wakes anew Life's glimmering trem-  
bling fires, 100

Hear Britain's sons rehearse thy praise with  
joy,

Look up to heaven, and bless his darling boy.  
If e'er these precepts quelled the passions'  
strife,

If e'er they smoothed the rugged walks of  
life,

If e'er they pointed forth the blissful way  
That guides the spirit to eternal day,  
Do thou, if gratitude inspire thy breast,  
Spurn the soft fetters of lethargic rest.

Awake, awake! and snatch the slumbering  
lyre,

Let this bright morn and Sandys the song  
inspire.' 110

"I looked obedience: the celestial Fair  
Smiled like the morn, and vanished into  
air."

### EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM,  
COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAV-  
ING SCHOOL

1786. 1815

Written at Hawkshead. The beautiful im-  
age with which this poem concludes, suggested  
itself to me while I was resting in a boat along  
with my companions under the shade of a mag-  
nificent row of sycamores, which then extended  
their branches from the shore of the promon-  
tory upon which stands the ancient, and at that  
time the more picturesque, Hall of Coniston,  
the seat of the Le Flemings from very early  
times. The poem of which it was the conclu-  
sion was of many hundred lines, and contained  
thoughts and images most of which have been  
dispersed through my other writings.

DEAR native regions, I foretell,  
From what I feel at this farewell,  
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,  
And whensoe'er my course shall end,  
If in that hour a single tie  
Survive of local sympathy,  
My soul will cast the backward view,  
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest  
Far in the regions of the west,  
Though to the vale no parting beam  
Be given, not one memorial gleam,  
A lingering light he fondly throws  
On the dear hills where first he rose.

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY  
YOUTH

1786. 1807

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.  
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass;  
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal:  
Dark is the ground; a slumber seems to  
steal

O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless  
sky.

Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal  
That grief for which the senses still supply  
Fresh food; for only then, when memory  
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends! re-  
strain

Those busy cares that would allay my pain;  
Oh! leave me to myself, nor let me feel  
The officious touch that makes me droop  
again.

## AN EVENING WALK

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY

1787-9. 1793

The young Lady to whom this was ad-  
dressed was my Sister. It was composed at  
school, and during my two first College vaca-  
tions. There is not an image in it which I  
have not observed; and now, in my seventy-  
third year, I recollect the time and place where  
most of them were noticed. I will confine my-  
self to one instance: —

“Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the vale,  
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale, —  
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,  
Hunts, where his master points, the intercepted  
flocks.”

I was an eye-witness of this for the first time  
while crossing the Pass of Dunmail Raise.  
Upon second thought, I will mention another  
image: —

“And, fronting the bright west, yon oak entwines  
Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger lines.”

This is feebly and imperfectly expressed, but I  
recollect distinctly the very spot where this first  
struck me. It was in the way between Hawks-  
head and Ambleside, and gave me extreme  
pleasure. The moment was important in my  
poetical history; for I date from it my con-  
sciousness of the infinite variety of natural  
appearances which had been unnoticed by the

poets of any age or country, so far as I was  
acquainted with them; and I made a resolu-  
tion to supply, in some degree, the deficiency.  
I could not have been at that time above  
fourteen years of age. The description of the  
swans, that follows, was taken from the daily  
opportunities I had of observing their habits,  
not as confined to the gentleman's park, but in a  
state of nature. There were two pairs of them  
that divided the lake of Esthwaite and its in-  
and-out-flowing streams between them, never  
trespassing a single yard upon each other's  
separate domain. They were of the old mag-  
nificent species, bearing in beauty and majesty  
about the same relation to the Thames swan  
which that does to the goose. It was from the  
remembrance of those noble creatures I took,  
thirty years after, the picture of the swan  
which I have discarded from the poem of Dion.  
While I was a school-boy, the late Mr. Curwen  
introduced a little fleet of those birds, but of  
the inferior species, to the lake of Windermere.  
Their principal home was about his own island;  
but they sailed about into remote parts of the  
lake, and, either from real or imagined injury  
done to the adjoining fields, they were got rid  
of at the request of the farmers and proprie-  
tors, but to the great regret of all who had  
become attached to them, from noticing their  
beauty and quiet habits. I will conclude my  
notice of this poem by observing that the plan  
of it has not been confined to a particular walk  
or an individual place, — a proof (of which I  
was unconscious at the time) of my unwilling-  
ness to submit the poetic spirit to the chains  
of fact and real circumstance. The country is  
idealised rather than described in any one of its  
local aspects.

General Sketch of the Lakes — Author's re-  
gret of his youth which was passed amongst  
them — Short description of Noon — Cascade  
— Noontide Retreat — Precipice and sloping  
Lights — Face of Nature as the Sun declines  
— Mountain-farm, and the Cock — Slate-  
quarry — Sunset — Superstition of the Coun-  
try connected with that moment — Swans —  
Female Beggar — Twilight-sounds — West-  
ern Lights — Spirits — Night — Moonlight  
— Hope — Night-sounds — Conclusion.

FAR from my dearest Friend, 't is mine to  
rove  
Through bare grey dell, high wood, and  
pastoral cove;  
Where Derwent rests, and listens to the  
roar  
That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lo-  
dore;



Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island  
 leads,  
 To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald  
 meads;  
 Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cot-  
 tagged grounds,  
 Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland  
 bounds;  
 Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander  
 sleeps  
 'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled  
 steepes;  
 Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's  
 shore,  
 And memory of departed pleasures, more.  
 Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy  
 child,

The echoes of your rocks my carols wild :  
 The spirit sought not then, in cherished sad-  
 ness,

A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.  
 In youth's keen eye the livelong day was  
 bright,

The sun at morning, and the stars at night,  
 Alike, when first the bittern's hollow bill  
 Was heard, or woodcocks roamed the moon-  
 light hill.

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,  
 And hope itself was all I knew of pain;  
 For then, the inexperienced heart would beat  
 At times, while young Content forsook her  
 seat,

And wild Impatience, pointing upward,  
 showed,

Through passes yet unreach'd, a brighter  
 road.

Alas ! the idle tale of man is found  
 Depicted in the dial's moral round;  
 Hope with reflection blends her solar rays  
 To gild the total tablet of his days;  
 Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,  
 He knows but from its shade the present  
 hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain ?  
 To show what pleasures yet to me remain,  
 Say, will my Friend, with unreluctant ear,  
 The history of a poet's evening hear ?

When, in the south, the wan noon, brood-  
 ing still,

Breathed a pale steam around the glaring  
 hill,

And shades of deep-embattled clouds were  
 seen,

Spotting the northern cliffs with lights be-  
 tween;

When crowding cattle, checked by rails that  
 make

A fence far stretched into the shallow lake,  
 Lashed the cool water with their restless  
 tails,

Or from high points of rock looked out for  
 fanning gales:

When school-boys stretched their length  
 upon the green;

And round the broad-spread oak, a glim-  
 mering scene,

In the rough fern-clad park, the herded deer  
 Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancing  
 ear;

When horses in the sunburnt intake stood,  
 And vainly eyed below the tempting flood,  
 Or tracked the passenger, in mute distress,  
 With forward neck the closing gate to  
 press —

Then, while I wandered where the huddling  
 rill

Brightens with water-breaks the hollow  
 ghyll

As by enchantment, an obscure retreat  
 Opened at once, and stayed my devious  
 feet.

While thick above the rill the branches  
 close,

In rocky basin its wild waves repose,  
 Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy green,  
 Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weeds  
 between;

And its own twilight softens the whole  
 scene,

Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams shine  
 On withered briars that o'er the crags re-  
 cline;

Save where, with sparkling foam, a small  
 cascade

Illumines, from within, the leafy shade;  
 Beyond, along the vista of the brook,  
 Where antique roots its bustling course  
 o'erlook,

The eye reposes on a secret bridge  
 Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its  
 ridge;

There, bending o'er the stream, the listless  
 swain

Lingers behind his disappearing wain.

— Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,  
 Blandusia's praise, wild stream, should yield  
 to thine !

Never shall ruthless minister of death  
 'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering steel  
 unsheath;

## AN EVENING WALK

No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned with  
flowers,  
No kid with piteous outcry thrill thy  
bowers;  
The mystic shapes that by thy margin  
rove  
A more benignant sacrifice approve —  
A mind, that, in a calm angelic mood 80  
Of happy wisdom, meditating good,  
Beholds, of all from her high powers re-  
quired,  
Much done, and much designed, and more  
desired, —  
Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth re-  
fined,  
Entire affection for all human kind.  
Dear Brook, farewell! To-morrow's noon  
again  
Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood  
strain;  
But now the sun has gained his western  
road,  
And eve's mild hour invites my steps abroad.  
While, near the midway cliff, the silvered  
kite 90  
In many a whistling circle wheels her flight;  
Slant watery lights, from parting clouds,  
apace  
Travel along the precipice's base;  
Cheering its naked waste of scattered stone,  
By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'er-  
grown;  
Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or thistle's  
beard;  
And restless stone-chat, all day long, is  
heard.  
How pleasant, as the sun declines, to view  
The spacious landscape change in form and  
hue!  
Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood 100  
Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and wood;  
There, objects, by the searching beams be-  
trayed,  
Come forth, and here retire in purple shade;  
Even the white stems of birch, the cottage  
white,  
Softened their glare before the mellow light;  
The skiffs, at anchor where with umbrage  
wide  
Yon chestnuts half the latticed boat-house  
hide,  
Shed from their sides, that face the sun's  
slant beam,  
Strong flakes of radiance on the tremulous  
stream:

Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty cloud  
Mounts from the road, and spreads its mov-  
ing shroud; 111  
The shepherd, all involved in wreaths of  
fire,  
Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is  
lost entire.  
Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,  
A blue rim borders all the lake's still brink;  
There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage  
sleep,  
And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy  
deep:  
And now, on every side, the surface breaks  
Into blue spots, and slowly lengthening  
streaks;  
Here, plots of sparkling water tremble  
bright 120  
With thousand thousand twinkling points  
of light;  
There, waves that, hardly weltering, die  
away,  
Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray;  
And now the whole wide lake in deep re-  
pose  
Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror  
glows,  
Save where, along the shady western marge,  
Coasts, with industrious oar, the charcoal  
barge.  
Their punnied train a group of potters  
goad,  
Winding from side to side up the steep road;  
The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful  
edge 130  
Shot, down the headlong path darts with his  
sledge;  
Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse il-  
lume  
Feeding 'mid purple heath, 'green rings,'  
and broom;  
While the sharp slope the slackened team  
confounds,  
Downward the ponderous timber-wain re-  
sounds;  
In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,  
Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along;  
From lonesome chapel at the mountain's  
foot,  
Three humble bells their rustic chime  
repeat;  
Sounds from the water-side the hammered  
boat; 140  
And blasted quarry thunders, heard remote!

Even here, amid the sweep of endless woods,  
Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and falling floods,  
Not undelightful are the simplest charms,  
Found by the grassy door of mountain-farms.

Sweetly ferocious, round his native walks,  
Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch stalks;

Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his tread;

A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.  
Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-ball hurls 150

Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls;  
On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion throat,

Threatened by faintly - answering farns remote:

Again with his shrill voice the mountain rings,

While, flapped with conscious pride, re-sound his wings.

Where, mixed with graceful birch, the sombrous pine

And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline;  
I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,  
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and numerous wains;

How busy all the enormous hive within, 160  
While Echo dallies with its various din!  
Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking sound?)

Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf profound;  
Some, dim between the lofty cliffs descried,  
O'erwalk the slender plank from side to side;

These, by the pale-blue rocks that ceaseless ring,

In airy baskets hanging, work and sing.

Just where a cloud above the mountain rears

An edge all flame, the broadening sun appears;

A long blue bar its ægis orb divides, 170  
And breaks the spreading of its golden tides;

And now that orb has touched the purple steep

Whose softened image penetrates the deep.  
'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs aspire,

With towers and woods, a 'prospect all on fire;'

While coves and secret hollows, through a ray

Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.  
Each slip of lawn the broken rocks between  
Shines in the light with more than earthly green:

Deep yellow beams the scattered stems illumine, 180

Far in the level forest's central gloom:

Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the vale,  
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale, —

The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,

Hunts, where his master points, the intercepted flocks.

Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance shoots

On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted roots;

The druid-stones a brightened ring unfold;  
And all the babbling brooks are liquid gold;  
Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still,  
Gives one bright glance, and drops behind the hill. 191

In these secluded vales, if village fame,  
Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may claim;  
When up the hills, as now, retired the light,

Strange apparitions mocked the shepherd's sight.

The form appears of one that spurs his steed

Midway along the hill with desperate speed;  
Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight, while all

Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.

Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show 200  
Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro;

At intervals imperial banners stream,  
And now the van reflects the solar beam;

The rear through iron brown betrays a sullen gleam.

While silent stands the admiring crowd below,

Silent the visionary warriors go,  
Winding in ordered pomp their upward way

Till the last banner of the long array  
Has disappeared, and every trace is fled

Of splendour — save the beacon's spire head 210

Tipt with eve's latest gleam of burning red.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows sail,

On slowly-waving pinions, down the vale;

And, fronting the bright west, yon oak  
entwines

Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger  
lines;

'T is pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray  
Where, winding on along some secret bay,  
The swan uplifts his chest, and backward  
flings

His neck, a varying arch, between his  
towering wings:

The eye that marks the gliding creature  
sees 220

How graceful pride can be, and how ma-  
jestic, ease.

While tender cares and mild domestic loves  
With furtive watch pursue her as she moves,  
The female with a meeker charm succeeds,  
And her brown little-ones around her leads,  
Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,  
Or playing wanton with the floating grass.  
She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride  
Forgetting, calls the wearied to her side;  
Alternately they mount her back, and rest  
Close by her mantling wings' embraces  
prest. 231

Long may they float upon this flood  
serene;

Theirs be these holms untrodden, still, and  
green,

Where leafy shades fence off the blustering  
gale,

And breathes in peace the lily of the vale!  
Yon isle, which feels not even the milk-  
maid's feet,

Yet hears her song, "by distance made  
more sweet,"

Yon isle conceals their home, their hut-like  
bower;

Green water-rushes overspread the floor;  
Long grass and willows form the woven wall,  
And swings above the roof the poplar tall.  
Thence issuing often with unwieldy stalk,  
They crush with broad black feet their  
flowery walk; 243

Or, from the neighbouring water, hear at  
morn

The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow  
horn;

Involve their serpent-necks in changeful  
rings,

Rolled wantonly between their slippery  
wings,

Or, starting up with noise and rude delight,  
Force half upon the wave their cumbrous  
flight.

Fair Swan! by all a mother's joys ca-  
ressed, 250

Haply some wretch has eyed, and called  
thee blessed;

When with her infants, from some shady  
seat

By the lake's edge, she rose — to face the  
noontide heat;

Or taught their limbs along the dusty road  
A few short steps to totter with their load.

I see her now, denied to lay her head,  
On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built  
shed,

Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,  
By pointing to the gliding moon on high.

— When low-hung clouds each star of  
summer hide, 260

And fireless are the valleys far and wide,  
Where the brook brawls along the public  
road

Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching  
broad,

Of she has taught them on her lap to lay  
The shining glow-worm; or, in heedless  
play,

Toss it from hand to hand, disquieted;  
While others, not unseen, are free to shed  
Green unmolested light upon their mossy  
bed.

Oh! when the sleety showers her path  
assail,

And like a torrent roars the headstrong  
gale; 270

No more her breath can thaw their fingers  
cold,

Their frozen arms her neck no more can  
fold;

Weak roof a cowering form two babes to  
shield,

And faint the fire a dying heart can yield!  
Press the sad kiss, fond mother! vainly fears  
Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its  
tears;

No tears can chill them, and no bosom  
warms,

Thy breast their death-bed, confined in thine  
arms!

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from  
afar,

Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding  
star, 280

Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling  
sedge,

And feeding pike starts from the water's  
edge,

Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and bill

Wetting, that drip upon the water still;  
And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,  
Shoots upward, darting his long neck before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell light

Blends with the solemn colouring of night;  
Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,

And round the west's proud lodge their shadows throw, <sup>290</sup>

Like Una shining on her gloomy way,  
The half-seen form of Twilight roams astray;

Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild and small,

Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom fall;

Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale  
Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.

With restless interchange at once the bright  
Wins on the shade, the shade upon the light.

No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze  
On lovelier spectacle in faery days; <sup>300</sup>

When gentle Spirits urged a sportive chase,  
Brushing with lucid wands the water's face:

While music, stealing round the glimmering deeps,

Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted steeps.

— The lights are vanished from the watery plains:

No wreck of all the pageantry remains.  
Unheeded night has overcome the vales:

On the dark earth the wearied vision fails;  
The latest lingerer of the forest train,

The lone black fir, forsakes the faded plain; <sup>310</sup>

Last evening sight, the cottage smoke, no more,

Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers hoar;

And, towering from the sullen dark-brown mere,

Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps appear.

— Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel

A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,  
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find

The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.

Stay! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay!  
Ah no! as fades the vale, they fade away:  
Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains;  
Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains. <sup>322</sup>

The bird, who ceased, with fading light,  
to thread

Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,  
From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon

Salute with gladsome note the rising moon,  
While with a hoary light she frosts the ground,

And pours a deeper blue to Æther's bound;  
Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds to fold

In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold. <sup>330</sup>

Above yon eastern hill, where darkness broods

O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and woods;

Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,

Even now she shews, half-veiled, her lovely face:

Across the gloomy valley flings her light,  
Far to the western slopes with hamlets white;

And gives, where woods the chequered upland strew,

To the green corn of summer, autumn's hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn

Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's own morn, <sup>340</sup>

Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer  
The weary hills, impervious, blackening near;

Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while

On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

Even now she decks for me a distant scene,

(For dark and broad the gulf of time between)

Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,  
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way;

How fair its lawns and sheltering woods appear!

How sweet its streamlet murmurs in mine ear!) <sup>350</sup>

Where we, my Friend, to happy days shall rise,

Till our small share of hardly-paining sighs

(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)  
Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of death.

But now the clear bright Moon her zenith gains,  
And, rimy without speck, extend the plains:  
The deepest cleft the mountain's front displays  
Scarcely hides a shadow from her searching rays;  
From the dark-blue faint silvery threads divide

The hills, while gleams below the azure tide;  
Time softly treads; throughout the landscape breathes  
A peace enlivened, not disturbed, by wreaths  
Of charcoal-smoke, that o'er the fallen wood,  
Steal down the hill, and spread along the flood.

The song of mountain-streams, unheard by day,  
Now hardly heard, beguiles my homeward way.

Air listens, like the sleeping water, still,  
To catch the spiritual music of the hill,  
Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,  
Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from sleep,

The echoed hoof nearing the distant shore,  
The boat's first motion — made with dashing oar;  
Sound of closed gate, across the water borne,  
Hurrying the timid hare through rustling corn;

The sportive outcry of the mocking owl;  
And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl;  
The distant forge's swinging thump profound;  
Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely hound.

## LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING

1789. 1798

This title is scarcely correct. It was during a solitary walk on the banks of the Cam that I was first struck with this appearance, and applied it to my own feelings in the manner here expressed, changing the scene to the Thames, near Windsor. This, and the three stanzas of the following poem, "Remembrance of Collins,"

formed one piece; but, upon the recommendation of Coleridge, the three last stanzas were separated from the other.

How richly glows the water's breast  
Before us, tinged with evening hues,  
While, facing thus the crimson west,  
The boat her silent course pursues!  
And see how dark the backward stream!  
A little moment past so smiling!  
And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,  
Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure;  
But, heedless of the following gloom,  
He deems their colours shall endure  
Till peace go with him to the tomb.  
— And let him nurse his fond deceit,  
And what if he must die in sorrow!  
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,  
Though grief and pain may come to-morrow?

## REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR RICHMOND

1789. 1798

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,  
O Thames! that other bards may see  
As lovely visions by thy side  
As now, fair river! come to me.  
O glide, fair stream! for ever so,  
Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,  
Till all our minds for ever flow  
As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought! — Yet be as now thou art,  
That in thy waters may be seen  
The image of a poet's heart,  
How bright, how solemn, how serene!  
Such as did once the Poet bless,  
Who murmuring here a later ditty,  
Could find no refuge from distress  
But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,  
For him suspend the dashing oar;  
And pray that never child of song  
May know that Poet's sorrows more.  
How calm! how still! the only sound,  
The dripping of the oar suspended!  
— The evening darkness gathers round  
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

## DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR  
AMONG THE ALPS

1791-2. 1793

Much the greatest part of this poem was composed during my walks upon the banks of the Loire in the years 1791, 1792. I will only notice that the description of the valley filled with mist, beginning — "In solemn shapes," was taken from that beautiful region of which the principal features are Lungarn and Sarnen. Nothing that I ever saw in nature left a more delightful impression on my mind than that which I have attempted, alas! how feebly, to convey to others in these lines. Those two lakes have always interested me especially, from bearing, in their size and other features, a resemblance to those of the North of England. It is much to be deplored that a district so beautiful should be so unhealthy as it is.

TO

THE REV. ROBERT JONES,

FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

DEAR SIR,

However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps, seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you, I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessaries upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the

features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgelert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steepes of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, 1793.

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature — Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller — Author crosses France to the Alps — Present state of the Grande Chartreuse — Lake of Como — Time, Sunset — Same Scene, Twilight — Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous Character; Old man and forest-cottage music — River Tusa — Via Mala and Grison Gipsy — Skellenen-thal — Lake of Uri — Stormy sunset — Chapel of William Tell — Force of local emotion — Chamois-chaser — View of the higher Alps — Manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed with views of the higher Alps — Golden age of the Alps — Life and views continued — Ranz des Vaches, famous Swiss Air — Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims — Valley of Chamouny — Mont Blanc — Slavery of Savoy — Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness — France — Wish for the Extirpation of Slavery — Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground  
Where from distress a refuge might be  
found,

And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;  
Sure, nature's God that spot to man had  
given

Where falls the purple morning far and  
wide

In flakes of light upon the mountain side;  
Where with loud voice the power of water  
shakes

The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall  
room,

Who at the call of summer quits his home,  
And plods through some wide realm o'er  
vale and height,

Though seeking only holiday delight;

At least, not owing to himself an aim  
To which the sage would give a prouder  
name.

No gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy,  
Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;  
Brisk toil, alternating with ready ease,  
Feeds the clear current of his sympathies.  
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;  
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening  
bourn!

Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,  
And dear the velvet green-sward to his  
tread:  
Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming  
eye?

Upward he looks — "and calls it luxury:"  
Kind Nature's charities his steps attend;  
In every babbling brook he finds a friend;  
While chastening thoughts of sweetest use,  
bestowed

By wisdom, moralise his pensive road.  
Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide  
bower,

To his spare meal he calls the passing poor;  
He views the sun uplift his golden fire,  
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's  
lyre;

Blesses the moon that comes with kindly  
ray,

To light him shaken by his rugged way.  
Back from his sight no bashful children steal;  
He sits a brother at the cottage-meal;  
His humble looks no shy restraint impart;  
Around him plays at will the virgin heart.  
While unsuspended wheels the village  
dance,

The maidens eye him with enquiring glance,  
Much wondering by what fit of crazing care,  
Or desperate love, bewildered, he came  
there.

A hope, that prudence could not then ap-  
prove,

That clung to Nature with a truant's love,  
O'er Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps led;  
Her files of road-elms, high above my head  
In long-drawn vista, rustling in the breeze;  
Or where her pathways straggle as they  
please

By lonely farms and secret villages.  
But lo! the Alps ascending white in air,  
Toy with the sun and glitter from afar.

And now, emerging from the forest's  
gloom,  
I greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn thy  
doom.

Whither is fled that Power whose frown  
severe

Awed sober Reason till she crouched in  
fear?

That Silence, once in deathlike fetters  
bound,

Chains that were loosened only by the sound  
Of holy rites chanted in measured round?

— The voice of blasphemy the fane alarms,  
The cloister startles at the gleam of arms.

The thundering tube the aged angler hears,  
Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps  
away his tears.

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their troubled  
heads,

Spires, rocks, and lawns a browner night  
o'erspreads;

Strong terror checks the female peasant's  
sighs,

And start the astonished shades at female  
eyes.

From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted  
jay,

And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.  
A viewless flight of laughing Demons mock

The Cross, by angels planted on the aerial  
rock.

The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow  
breath

Along the mystic streams of Life and Death.  
Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds

Portentous through her old woods' trackless  
bounds,

Vallombre, 'mid her falling fanes, deplores,  
For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden margin  
roves

Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut groves.  
No meadows thrown between, the giddy

steeps  
Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow  
deeps.

— To towns, whose shades of no rude noise  
complain,

From ringing team apart and grating  
wain —

To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's  
bound,

Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,  
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,

And o'er the whitened wave their shadows  
fling —

The pathway leads, as round the steepes it  
twines;

And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.



The loitering traveller hence, at evening,  
 sees  
 From rock-hewn steps the sail between the  
 trees;  
 Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-<sup>90</sup>  
 eyed maids  
 Tend the small harvest of their garden  
 glades;  
 Or stops, the solemn mountain-shades to  
 view  
 Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad and  
 blue,  
 And track the yellow lights from steep to  
 steep,  
 As up the opposing hills they slowly creep.  
 Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed  
 In golden light; half hides itself in shade;  
 While, from amid the darkened roofs, the  
 spire,  
 Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like  
 fire: <sup>100</sup>  
 There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw  
 Rich golden verdure on the lake below.  
 Slow glides the sail along the illumined  
 shore,  
 And steals into the shade the lazy oar;  
 Soft bosoms breathe around contagious  
 sighs,  
 And amorous music on the water dies.  
 How blest, delicious scene! the eye that  
 greets  
 Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats;  
 Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood that  
 scales <sup>109</sup>  
 Thy cliffs; the endless waters of thy vales;  
 Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,  
 Each with its household boat beside the  
 door;  
 Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue  
 sky;  
 Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows' nests,  
 on high;  
 That glimmer hoar in eve's last light, de-  
 seried  
 Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,  
 Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted  
 woods  
 Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods;  
 Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled, blue or  
 grey,  
 'Mid smoking woods gleams hid from morn-  
 ing's ray <sup>120</sup>  
 Slow-travelling down the western hills, to  
 enfold  
 Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold;

Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin  
 bell  
 Calls forth the woodman from his desert  
 cell,  
 And quickens the blithe sound of oars that  
 pass  
 Along the steaming lake, to early mass.  
 But now farewell to each and all — adieu  
 To every charm, and last and chief to you,  
 Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade <sup>129</sup>  
 Rest near your little plots of wheaten glade;  
 To all that binds the soul in powerless trance,  
 Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing dance;  
 Where sparkling eyes and breaking smiles  
 illumine  
 The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.  
 — Alas! the very murmur of the streams  
 Breathes o'er the failing soul voluptuous  
 dreams,  
 While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to  
 dwell  
 On joys that might disgrace the captive's  
 cell,  
 Her shameless timbrel shakes on Como's  
 marge <sup>139</sup>  
 And lures from bay to bay the vocal barge.  
 Yet are thy softer arts with power indued  
 To soothe and cheer the poor man's solitude.  
 By silent cottage doors, the peasant's home  
 Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam.  
 But once I pierced the mazes of a wood  
 In which a cabin undeserted stood;  
 There an old man an olden measure scanned  
 On a rude viol touched with withered hand.  
 As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie  
 Under a hoary oak's thin canopy, <sup>150</sup>  
 Stretched at his feet, with stedfast upward  
 eye,  
 His children's children listened to the sound;  
 — A Hermit with his family around!  
 But let us hence; for fair Locarno smiles  
 Embowered in walnut slopes and citron  
 isles:  
 Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa's stream,  
 Where, 'mid dim towers and woods, her wa-  
 ters gleam.  
 From the bright wave, in solemn gloom,  
 retire  
 The dull-red steepes, and, darkening still, as-  
 pire  
 To where afar rich orange lustres glow <sup>160</sup>  
 Round undistinguished clouds, and rocks,  
 and snow:  
 Or, led where Via Mala's chasms confine  
 The indignant waters of the infant Rhine,

Hang o'er the abyss, whose else impervious  
gloom

His burning eyes with fearful light illumine.

The mind condemned, without reprieve,  
to go

O'er life's long deserts with its charge of  
woe,

With sad congratulation joins the train  
Where beasts and men together o'er the  
plain

Move on — a mighty caravan of pain: 170  
Hope, strength, and courage, social suffer-  
ing brings,

Freshening the wilderness with shades and  
springs.

— There be whose lot far otherwise is cast:  
Sole human tenant of the piny waste,  
By choice or doom a gipsy wanders here,  
A nursling babe her only comforter;  
Lo, where she sits beneath yon shaggy rock,  
A cowering shape half hid in curling smoke !

When lightning among clouds and moun-  
tain-snows 179

Predominates, and darkness comes and goes,  
And the fierce torrent, at the flashes broad  
Starts, like a horse, beside the glaring  
road —

She seeks a covert from the battering shower  
In the roofed bridge; the bridge, in that  
dread hour,

Itself all trembling at the torrent's power.

Nor is she more at ease on some *still* night,  
When not a star supplies the comfort of its  
light;

Only the waning moon hangs dull and red  
Above a melancholy mountain's head,  
Then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant  
sighs, 180

Stoops her sick head, and shuts her weary  
eyes;

Or on her fingers counts the distant clock,  
Or, to the drowsy crow of midnight cock,  
Listens, or quakes while from the forest's  
gulf

Howls near and nearer yet the famished  
wolf.

From the green vale of Urseren smooth  
and wide

Descend we now, the maddened Reuss our  
guide;

By rocks that, shutting out the blessed day,  
Cling tremblingly to rocks as loose as they;  
By cells upon whose image, while he prays,  
The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to  
gaze; 201

By many a votive death-cross planted near,  
And watered duly with the pious tear,  
That faded silent from the upward eye  
Unmoved with each rude form of peril high;  
Fixed on the anchor left by Him who saves  
Alike in whelming snows, and roaring waves.

But soon a peopled region on the sight  
Opens — a little world of calm delight;  
Where mists, suspended on the expiring  
gale, 210

Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded vale,  
And beams of evening slipping in between,  
Gently illuminate a sober scene: —

Here, on the brown wood-cottages they  
sleep,

There, over rock or sloping pasture creep.  
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,  
The still vale lengthens underneath its shade  
Of low-hung vapour: on the freshened mead  
The green light sparkles; — the dim bowers  
recede.

While pastoral pipes and streams the land-  
scape fill, 220

And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,  
In solemn shapes before the admiring eye  
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,  
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and  
towers,

And antique castles seen through gleamy  
showers.

From such romantic dreams, my soul,  
awake !

To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake,  
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,  
Winds neither road nor path for foot to  
tread:

The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch  
Far o'er the water, hung with groves of  
beech; 231

Aërial pines from loftier steepes ascend,  
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.  
Yet here and there, if mid the savage scene  
Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,  
Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep  
To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly on  
the steep,

— Before those thresholds (never can they  
know

The face of traveller passing to and fro,)  
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell 240  
For whom at morning tolled the funeral bell;  
Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark fore-  
goes,

Touched by the beggar's moan of human  
woes;

The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat  
To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.  
Yet thither the world's business finds its  
way

At times, and takes unsought beguile the  
day,

And *there* are those fond thoughts which  
Solitude,

However stern, is powerless to exclude.

There doth the maiden watch her lover's  
sail

Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale;  
At midnight listens till his parting oar,  
And its last echo, can be heard no more.

And what if ospreys, cormorants, herons,  
cry

Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,  
Or hovering over wastes too bleak to rear  
That common growth of earth, the foodful  
ear;

Where the green apple shrivels on the spray,  
And pines the unripened pear in summer's  
kindest ray;

Contentment shares the desolate domain  
With Independence, child of high Disdain.  
Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,  
Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,  
And grasps by fits her sword, and often  
eyes;

And sometimes, as from rock to rock she  
bounds

The Patriot nymph starts at imagined  
sounds,

And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,  
Whether some old Swiss air hath checked  
her haste

Or thrill of Spartan life is caught between  
the blast.

Swollen with incessant rains from hour to  
hour,

All day the floods a deepening murmur  
pour:

The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight:  
Dark is the region as with coming night;  
But what a sudden burst of overpowering  
light!

Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious form!  
Eastward, in long perspective glittering,  
shine

The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake  
recline;

Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams unfold,  
At once to pillars turned that flame with  
gold:

Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to shun  
The *west*, that burns like one dilated sun,  
A crucible of mighty compass, felt  
By mountains, glowing till they seem to  
melt.

But, lo! the boatman, overawed, before  
The pictured fane of Tell suspends his oar;  
Confused the Marathonian tale appears,  
While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.  
And who, that walks where men of ancient  
days

Have wrought with godlike arm the deeds  
of praise,

Feels not the spirit of the place control,  
Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul?  
Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,  
Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,  
On Zutphen's plain; or on that highland dell,  
Through which rough Garry cleaves his  
way, can tell

What high resolves exalt the tenderest  
thought

Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,  
Where breathed the gale that caught  
Wolfe's happiest sigh,

And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's eye;  
Where bleeding Sidney from the cup re-  
tired,

And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas" ex-  
pired?

But now with other mind I stand alone  
Upon the summit of this naked cone,  
And watch the fearless chamois-hunter  
chase

His prey, through tracts abrupt of desolate  
space,

Through vacant worlds where Nature never  
gave

A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,  
Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred keep;  
Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and  
Motion sleep;

Where silent Hours their deathlike sway  
extend,

Save when the avalanche breaks loose, to  
rend

Its way with uproar, till the ruin, drowned  
In some dense wood or gulf of snow pro-  
found,

Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf abor-  
tive sound.

— 'T is his, while wandering on from height  
to height,

To see a planet's pomp and steady light  
In the least star of scarce-appearing night;

While the pale moon moves near him, on  
the bound <sup>319</sup>

Of ether, shining with diminished round,  
And far and wide the icy summits blaze,  
Rejoicing in the glory of her rays:  
To him the day-star glitters small and  
bright,

Shorn of its beams, insufferably white,  
And he can look beyond the sun, and view  
Those fast-receding depths of sable blue  
Flying till vision can no more pursue!

— At once bewildering mists around him  
close,

And cold and hunger are his least of woes;  
The Demon of the snow, with angry roar  
Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.  
Soon with despair's whole weight his spirits  
sink; <sup>332</sup>

Bread has he none, the snow must be his  
drink;

And, ere his eyes can close upon the day,  
The eagle of the Alps o'ershades her prey.

Now couch thyself where, heard with fear  
afar,

Thunders through echoing pines the head-  
long Aar;

Or rather stay to taste the mild delights  
Of pensive Underwalden's pastoral heights.

— Is there who 'mid these awful wilds has  
seen <sup>340</sup>

The native Genii walk the mountain green?  
Or heard, while other worlds their charms  
reveal,

Soft music o'er the ærial summit steal?  
While o'er the desert, answering every  
close,

Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes and  
goes.

— And sure there is a secret Power that  
reigns

Here, where no trace of man the spot pro-  
fanes,

Nought but the *chalets*, flat and bare, on high  
Suspended 'mid the quiet of the sky;

Or distant herds that pasturing upward  
creep, <sup>350</sup>

And, not untended, climb the dangerous  
steep.

How still! no irreligious sound or sight  
Rouses the soul from her severe delight.

An idle voice the sabbath region fills  
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,

And with that voice accords the soothing  
sound

Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round;

Faint wail of eagle melting into blue  
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods' steady

*sough*;  
The solitary heifer's deepened low; <sup>360</sup>

Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling snow.  
All motions, sounds, and voices, far and  
nigh,

Blend in a music of tranquillity;  
Save when, a stranger seen below, the boy  
Shouts from the echoing hills with savage  
joy.

When, from the sunny breast of open  
seas,

And bays with myrtle fringed, the southern  
breeze

Comes on to gladden April with the sight  
Of green isles widening on each snow-clad  
height;

When shouts and lowing herds the valley  
fill, <sup>370</sup>

And louder torrents stun the noon-tide hill,  
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,  
Leaving to silence the deserted vale;

And like the Patriarchs in their simple age  
Move, as the verdure leads, from stage to  
stage:

High and more high in summer's heat they  
go,

And hear the rattling thunder far below;  
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-de-  
terred,

Where huge rocks tremble to the bellowing  
herd.

One I behold who, 'cross the foaming  
flood, <sup>380</sup>

Leaps with a bound of graceful hardihood;  
Another, high on that green ledge;— he  
gained

The tempting spot with every sinew  
strained;

And downward thence a knot of grass he  
throws,

Food for his beasts in time of winter snows.  
— Far different life from what Tradition  
hoar

Transmits of happier lot in times of yore!  
Then Summer lingered long; and honey  
flowed

From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe  
abode:

Continual waters welling cheered the waste,  
And plants were wholesome, now of deadly  
taste: <sup>391</sup>

Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled,  
Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled:

Nor Hunger driven the herds from pastures  
bare,  
To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty  
fare.

Then the milk-thistle flourished through the  
land,

And forced the full-swollen udder to demand,  
Thrice every day, the pail and welcome  
hand.

Thus does the father to his children tell <sup>399</sup>  
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too well.  
Alas! that human guilt provoked the rod  
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.  
Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts  
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

'Tis morn: with gold the verdant moun-  
tain glows

More high, the snowy peaks with hues of  
rose.

Far-stretched beneath the many-tinted hills,  
A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,  
A solemn sea! whose billows wide around  
Stand motionless, to awful silence bound: <sup>410</sup>  
Pines, on the coast, through mist their tops  
uprear,

That like to leaning masts of stranded ships  
appear.

A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,  
Gapes in the centre of the sea — and,  
through

That dark mysterious gulf ascending, sound  
Innumerable streams with roar profound.  
Mount through the nearer vapours notes of  
birds,

And merry flageolet; the low of herds,  
The bark of dogs, the heifer's tinkling  
bell,

Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-  
tower knell: <sup>420</sup>

Think not, the peasant from aloft has gazed  
And heard with heart unmoved, with soul  
unraised:

Nor is his spirit less enrapt, nor less  
Alive to independent happiness,  
Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at even-  
tide,

Upon the fragrant mountain's purple side:  
For as the pleasures of his simple day  
Beyond his native valley seldom stray,  
Nought round its darling precincts can he  
find <sup>429</sup>

But brings some past enjoyment to his mind;  
While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure's urn,  
Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers his re-  
turn.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild,  
Was blest as free — for he was Nature's  
child.

He, all superior but his God disdained,  
Walked none restraining, and by none re-  
strained

Confessed no law but what his reason taught,  
Did all he wished, and wished but what he  
ought.

As man in his primeval dower arrayed  
The image of his glorious Sire displayed, <sup>440</sup>  
Even so, by faithful Nature guarded, here  
The traces of primeval Man appear;  
The simple dignity no forms debase;  
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace:  
The slave of none, of beasts alone the lord,  
His book he prizes, nor neglects his sword;  
Well taught by that to feel his rights, pre-  
pared

With this "the blessings he enjoys to  
guard."

And, as his native hills encircle ground  
For many a marvellous victory renowned,  
'The work of Freedom daring to oppose, <sup>451</sup>  
With few in arms, innumerable foes,  
When to those famous fields his steps are led,  
An unknown power connects him with the  
dead:

For images of other worlds are there;  
Awful the light, and holy is the air.  
Fitfully, and in flashes, through his soul,  
Like sun-lit tempests, troubled transports  
roll;

His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers amain,  
Beyond the senses and their little reign. <sup>460</sup>

And oft, when that dread vision hath past  
by,

He holds with God himself communion high,  
There where the peal of swelling torrents  
fills

The sky-roofed temple of the eternal hills;  
Or when, upon the mountain's silent brow  
Reclined, he sees, above him and below,  
Bright stars of ice and azure fields of snow;  
While needle peaks of granite shooting bare  
Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.

And when a gathering weight of shadows  
brown <sup>470</sup>

Falls on the valleys as the sun goes down;  
And Pikes, of darkness named and fear and  
storms,

Uplift in quiet their illumined forms,  
In sea-like reach of prospect round him  
spread,

Tinged like an angel's smile all rosy red —

Awe in his breast with holiest love unites,  
And the near heavens impart their own delights.

When downward to his winter hut he goes,  
Dear and more dear the lessening circle grows;

That hut which on the hills so oft employs  
His thoughts, the central point of all his joys. <sup>481</sup>

And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,  
Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,  
So to the homestead, where the grandsire tends

A little prattling child, he oft descends,  
To glance a look upon the well-matched pair;

Till storm and driving ice blockade him there.

There, safely guarded by the woods behind,  
He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,  
Hears Winter calling all his terrors round,  
And, blest within himself, he shrinks not from the sound. <sup>491</sup>

Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures glide,

Unstained by envy, discontent, and pride;  
The bound of all his vinity, to deck,  
With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's neck;

Well pleased upon some simple annual feast,  
Remembered half the year and hoped the rest,

If dairy-produce, from his inner board,  
Of thrice ten summers dignify the board.

Alas ! in every clime a flying ray <sup>500</sup>  
Is all we have to cheer our wintry way;  
And here the unwilling mind may more than trace

The general sorrows of the human race;  
The churlish gales of penury, that blow  
Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of snow,  
To them the gentle groups of bliss deny  
That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.  
Yet more ; — compelled by Powers which only deign

That solitary man disturb their reign,  
Powers that support an unremitting strife  
With all the tender charities of life, <sup>511</sup>  
Full oft the father, when his sons have grown

To manhood, seems their title to disown;  
And from his nest amid the storms of heaven  
Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was driven;

With stern composure watches to the plain —

And never, eagle-like, beholds again !

When long-familiar joys are all resigned,  
Why does their sad remembrance haunt the mind ?

Lo ! where through flat Batavia's willowy groves, <sup>520</sup>

Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves ;

O'er the curled waters Alpine measures swell,

And search the affections to their inmost cell ;

Sweet poison spreads along the listener's veins,

Turning past pleasures into mortal pains ;

Poison, which not a frame of steel can brave,  
Bows his young head with sorrow to the grave.

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song resume !  
Ye flattering eastern lights, once more the hills illumine !

Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious morn, <sup>530</sup>

And thou, lost fragrance of the heart, return !

Alas ! the little joy to man allowed  
Fades like the lustre of an evening cloud ;  
Or like the beauty in a flower installed,  
Whose season was, and cannot be recalled.

Yet, when oppress by sickness, grief, or care,  
And taught that pain is pleasure's natural heir,

We still confide in more than we can know ;  
Death would be else the favourite friend of woe.

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine, <sup>540</sup>

Between interminable tracts of pine,  
Within a temple stands an awful shrine,  
By an uncertain light revealed, that falls  
On the mute Image and the troubled walls.  
Oh ! give not me that eye of hard disdain  
That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's wretched fane.

While ghastly faces through the gloom appear,

Abortive joy, and hope that works in fear ;  
While prayer contends with silenced agony,  
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die  
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear  
One flower of hope — oh, pass and leave it there ! <sup>552</sup>

The tall sun, pausing on an Alpine spire,  
Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of fire :

Now meet we other pilgrims ere the day  
Close on the remnant of their weary way;  
While they are drawing toward the sacred  
floor

Where, so they fondly think, the worm shall  
gnaw no more.

How gaily murmur and how sweetly taste  
The fountains reared for them amid the  
waste!

Their thirst they slake: — they wash their<sup>560</sup>  
toil-worn feet

And some with tears of joy each other greet.  
Yes, I must see you when ye first behold  
Those holy turrets tipped with evening gold;  
In that glad moment will for you a sigh  
Be heaved, of charitable sympathy;  
In that glad moment when your hands are  
prest

In mute devotion on the thankful breast!

Last, let us turn to Chamouny that shields  
With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile  
fields:

Five streams of ice amid her cots descend,  
And with wild flowers and blooming or-  
chards blend; —

A scene more fair than what the Grecian  
feigns

Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains;  
Here all the seasons revel hand in hand:

'Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets  
fanned,

They sport beneath that mountain's match-  
less height

That holds no commerce with the summer  
night.

From age to age, throughout his lonely  
bounds

The crash of ruin fitfully resounds; <sup>580</sup>

Appalling havoc! but serene his brow,  
Where daylight lingers on perpetual snow;  
Glitter the stars above, and all is black below.

What marvel then if many a Wanderer  
sigh,

While roars the sullen Arve in anger by,  
That not for thy reward, unrivalled Vale!  
Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal  
gale;

That thou, the slaves of slaves, art doomed  
to pine

And droop, while no Italian arts are thine,  
To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine. <sup>590</sup>

Hail Freedom! whether it was mine to  
stray,

With shrill winds whistling round my lonely  
way,

On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-clad  
moors,

Or where dank sea-weed lashes Scotland's  
shores;

To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breath-  
ing rose,

And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows;  
Still have I found, where Tyranny prevails,  
That virtue languishes and pleasure fails,  
While the remotest hamlets blessings share  
In thy loved presence known, and only  
there; <sup>600</sup>

Heart-blessings — outward treasures, too,  
which the eye

Of the sun peeping through the clouds can  
spy,

And every passing breeze will testify.

There, to the porch, belike with jasmine  
bound

Or woodbine wreaths, a smoother path is  
wound;

The housewife there a brighter garden sees,  
Where hum on busier wing her happy bees;  
On infant cheeks there fresher roses blow;  
And grey-haired men look up with livelier  
brow, —

To greet the traveller needing food and  
rest; <sup>610</sup>

Housed for the night, or but a half-hour's  
guest.

And oh, fair France! though now the  
traveller sees

Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on the  
breeze;

Though martial songs have banished songs  
of love,

And nightingales desert the village grove,  
Scared by the fife and rumbling drum's  
alarms,

And the short thunder, and the flash of arms;  
That cease not till night falls, when far and  
nigh,

Sole sound, the Soud prolongs his mourn-  
ful cry!

— Yet, hast thou found that Freedom spreads  
her power <sup>620</sup>

Beyond the cottage-hearth, the cottage-door:  
All nature smiles, and owns beneath her eyes  
Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.

Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's waters  
glide

Through rustling aspens heard from side to  
side,

When from October clouds a milder light  
Fell where the blue flood rippled into white;

Methought from every cot the watchful bird  
Crowed with ear-piercing power till then  
unheard;

Each clacking mill, that broke the murmur-  
ing streams, 630

Rocked the charmed thought in more de-  
lightful dreams;

Chasing those pleasant dreams, the falling  
leaf

Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief;  
The measured echo of the distant flail  
Wound in more welcome cadence down the  
vale;

With more majestic course the water rolled,  
And ripening foliage shone with richer gold.  
— But foes are gathering — Liberty must  
raise

Red on the hills her beacon's far-seen blaze;  
Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to  
tower! — 640

Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour!  
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride's per-  
verted ire

Rouse hell's own aid, and wrap thy fields in  
fire;

Lo, from the flames a great and glorious  
birth;

As if a new-made heaven were hailing a  
new earth!

— All cannot be: the promise is too fair  
For creatures doomed to breathe terrestrial  
air:

Yet not for this will sober reason frown  
Upon that promise, nor the hope disown; 649  
She knows that only from high aims ensue  
Rich guerdons, and to them alone are due.

Great God! by whom the strifes of men  
are weighed

In an impartial balance, give thine aid  
To the just cause; and, oh! do thou pre-  
side

Over the mighty stream now spreading  
wide:

So shall its waters, from the heavens sup-  
plied

In copious showers, from earth by whole-  
some springs,

Brood o'er the long-parched lands with Nile-  
like wings!

And grant that every sceptred child of clay  
Who cries presumptuous, "Here the flood  
shall stay," 660

May in its progress see thy guiding hand,  
And cease the acknowledged purpose to  
withstand;

Or, swept in anger from the insulted shore,  
Sink with his servile bands, to rise no more!

To-night, my Friend, within this humble  
cot

Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot  
In timely sleep; and when, at break of  
day,

On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams  
play,

With a light heart our course we may re-  
new,

The first whose footsteps print the mountain  
dew. 670

## GUILT AND SORROW

## OR INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN

1791-4. 1842

Unwilling to be unnecessarily particular, I have assigned this poem to the dates 1791 and '94; but in fact much of the "Female Vagrant's" story was composed at least two years before. All that relates to her sufferings as a sailor's wife in America, and her condition of mind during her voyage home, were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend who had been subjected to the same trials and affected in the same way. Mr. Coleridge, when I first became acquainted with him, was so much impressed with this poem, that it would have encouraged me to publish the whole as it then stood; but the mariner's fate appeared to me so tragical as to require a treatment more subdued and yet more strictly applicable in expression than I had at first given to it. This fault was corrected nearly fifty years afterwards, when I determined to publish the whole. It may be worth while to remark, that, though the incidents of this attempt do only in a small degree produce each other, and it deviates accordingly from the general rule by which narrative pieces ought to be governed, it is not therefore wanting in continuous hold upon the mind, or in unity, which is effected by the identity of moral interest that places the two personages upon the same footing in the reader's sympathies. My rambles over many parts of Salisbury Plain put me, as mentioned in the preface, upon writing this poem, and left on my mind imaginative impressions the force of which I have felt to this day. From that district I proceeded to Bath, Bristol, and so on to the banks of the Wye, where I took again to travelling on foot. In remembrance of that part of my journey, which was in '83, I began the verses — "Five years have passed."



## ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS  
POEM, PUBLISHED IN 1842

Not less than one third of the following poem, though it has from time to time been altered in the expression, was published so far back as the year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant." The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here: but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as matter of literary biography than for any other reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widely spread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

## I

A TRAVELLER on the skirt of Sarum's  
Plain  
Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half  
bare;

Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain  
Help from the staff he bore; for mien and  
air  
Were hardy, though his cheek seemed worn  
with care  
Both of the time to come, and time long  
fled:  
Down fell in straggling locks his thin grey  
hair;  
A coat he wore of military red  
But faded, and stuck o'er with many a patch  
and shred.

## II

While thus he journeyed, step by step led  
on,  
He saw and passed a stately inn, full  
sure  
That welcome in such house for him was  
none.  
No board inscribed the needy to allure  
Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old and  
poor  
And desolate, "Here you will find a  
friend!"  
The pendent grapes glittered above the  
door;—  
On he must pace, perchance 'till night de-  
scend,  
Where'er the dreary roads their bare white  
lines extend.

## III

The gathering clouds grow red with stormy  
fire,  
In streaks diverging wide and mounting  
high;  
That inn he long had passed; the distant  
spire,  
Which oft as he looked back had fixed his  
eye,  
Was lost, though still he looked, in the blank  
sky.  
Perplexed and comfortless he gazed around,  
And scarce could any trace of man de-  
sery,  
Save cornfields stretched and stretching  
without bound;  
But where the sower dwelt was nowhere to  
be found.

## IV

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant  
green,  
No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear;

Long files of corn-stacks here and there  
 were seen, 30  
 But not one dwelling-place his heart to  
 cheer.  
 Some labourer, thought he, may perchance  
 be near;  
 And so he sent a feeble shout — in vain;  
 No voice made answer, he could only hear  
 Winds rustling over plots of unripe grain,  
 Or whistling thro' thin grass along the un-  
 furrowed plain.

V

Long had he fancied each successive slope  
 Concealed some cottage, whither he might  
 turn  
 And rest; but now along heaven's darken-  
 ing cope  
 The crows rushed by in eddies, homeward  
 borne. 40  
 Thus warned he sought some shepherd's  
 spreading thorn  
 Or hovel from the storm to shield his head,  
 But sought in vain; for now, all wild, for-  
 lorn,  
 And vacant, a huge waste around him  
 spread;  
 The wet cold ground, he feared, must be  
 his only bed.

VI

And be it so — for to the chill night shower  
 And the sharp wind his head he oft hath  
 bared;  
 A Sailor he, who many a wretched hour  
 Hath told; for, landing after labour hard,  
 Full long endured in hope of just reward,  
 He to an armed fleet was forced away 50  
 By seamen, who perhaps themselves had  
 shared  
 Like fate; was hurried off, a helpless prey,  
 'Gainst all that in his heart, or theirs per-  
 haps, said nay.

VII

For years the work of carnage did not  
 cease,  
 And death's dire aspect daily he surveyed,  
 Death's minister; then came his glad re-  
 lease,  
 And hope returned, and pleasure fondly  
 made  
 Her dwelling in his dreams. By Fancy's  
 aid  
 The happy husband flies, his arms to throw

Round his wife's neck; the prize of victory  
 laid 60  
 In her full lap, he sees such sweet tears  
 flow  
 As if thenceforth nor pain nor trouble she  
 could know.

VIII

Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had  
 earned.  
 The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood  
 Even in the desert's heart; but he, re-  
 turned,  
 Bears not to those he loves their needful  
 food.  
 His home approaching, but in such a mood  
 That from his sight his children might have  
 run.  
 He met a traveller, robbed him, shed his  
 blood; 70  
 And when the miserable work was done  
 He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's  
 fate to shun.

IX

From that day forth no place to him could  
 be  
 So lonely, but that thence might come a  
 pang  
 Brought from without to inward misery.  
 Now, as he plodded on, with sullen clang  
 A sound of chains along the desert rang;  
 He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high  
 A human body that in irons swang,  
 Uplifted by the tempest whirling by; 80  
 And, hovering, round it often did a raven  
 fly.

X

It was a spectacle which none might view,  
 In spot so savage, but with shuddering  
 pain;  
 Nor only did for him at once renew  
 All he had feared from man, but roused a  
 train  
 Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.  
 The stones, as if to cover him from day,  
 Rolled at his back along the living plain;  
 He fell, and without sense or motion lay;  
 But, when the trance was gone, feebly pur-  
 sued his way. 90

XI

As one whose brain habitual phrensy fires  
 Owes to the fit in which his soul hath tossed

Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,  
Even so the dire phantasma which had  
crossed

His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,  
Left his mind still as a deep evening stream.  
Nor, if accosted now, in thought engrossed,  
Moody, or inly troubled, would he seem  
To traveller who might talk of any casual  
theme.

## XII

Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness piled,  
Gone is the raven timely rest to seek; 101  
He seemed the only creature in the wild  
On whom the elements their rage might  
wreak;  
Save that the bustard, of those regions  
bleak  
Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light  
A man there wandering, gave a mournful  
shriek,  
And half upon the ground, with strange  
affright,  
Forced hard against the wind a thick un-  
wieldy flight.

## XIII

All, all was cheerless to the horizon's  
bound;  
The weary eye — which, wheresoe'er it  
strays, 110  
Marks nothing but the red sun's setting  
round,  
Or on the earth strange lines, in former  
days  
Left by gigantic arms — at length surveys  
What seems an antique castle spreading  
wide;  
Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise  
Their brow sublime: in shelter there to  
bide  
He turned, while rain poured down smok-  
ing on every side.

## XIV

Pile of Stone-henge! so proud to hint yet  
keep  
Thy secrets, thou that lov'st to stand and  
hear  
The Plain resounding to the whirlwind's  
sweep, 120  
Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless year;  
Even if thou saw'st the giant wicker rear  
For sacrifice its throngs of living men,  
Before thy face did ever wretch appear,

Who in his heart had groaned with deadlier  
pain  
Than he who, tempest-driven, thy shelter  
now would gain.

## XV

Within that fabric of mysterious form,  
Winds met in conflict, each by turns su-  
preme;  
And, from the perilous ground dislodged,  
through storm  
And rain he wildered on, no moon to stream  
From gulf of parting clouds one friendly  
beam, 131  
Nor any friendly sound his footsteps led;  
Once did the lightning's faint disastrous  
gleam  
Disclose a naked guide-post's double head,  
Sight which tho' lost at once a gleam of  
pleasure shed.

## XVI

No swinging sign-board creaked from cot-  
tage elm  
To stay his steps with faintness over-  
come;  
'T was dark and void as ocean's watery  
realm  
Roaring with storms beneath night's star-  
less gloom;  
No gipsy cowered o'er fire of furze or  
broom; 140  
No labourer watched his red kiln glaring  
bright,  
Nor taper glimmered dim from sick man's  
room;  
Along the waste no line of mournful light  
From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed  
athwart the night.

## XVII

At length, though hid in clouds, the moon  
arose;  
The downs were visible — and now revealed  
A structure stands, which two bare slopes  
enclose.  
It was a spot, where, ancient vows ful-  
filled,  
Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build  
A lonely Spital, the belated swain  
From the night terrors of that waste to  
shield: 150  
But there no human being could remain,  
And now the walls are named the 'Dead  
House' of the plain.

XVIII

Though he had little cause to love the abode  
Of man, or covet sight of mortal face,  
Yet when faint beams of light that ruin  
showed,  
How glad he was at length to find some  
trace  
Of human shelter in that dreary place.  
Till to his flock the early shepherd goes,  
Here shall much-needed sleep his frame  
embrace. 160  
In a dry nook where fern the floor bestows  
He lays his stiffened limbs, — his eyes be-  
gin to close;

XIX

When hearing a deep sigh, that seemed to  
come  
From one who mourned in sleep, he raised  
his head,  
And saw a woman in the naked room  
Outstretched, and turning on a restless  
bed:  
The moon a wan dead light around her  
shed.  
He waked her — spake in tone that would  
not fail,  
He hoped, to calm her mind; but ill he sped,  
For of that ruin she had heard a tale 170  
Which now with freezing thoughts did all  
her powers assail;

XX

Had heard of one who, forced from storms  
to shroud,  
Felt the loose walls of this decayed Retreat  
Rock to incessant neighings shrill and  
loud,  
While his horse pawed the floor with fu-  
rious heat;  
Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,  
Struck, and still struck again, the troubled  
horse:  
The man half raised the stone with pain  
and sweat,  
Half raised, for well his arm might lose its  
force  
Disclosing the grim head of a late murdered  
corse. 180

XXI

Such tale of this lone mansion she had  
learned  
And, when that shape, with eyes in sleep  
half drowned,

By the moon's sullen lamp she first dis-  
cerned,  
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.  
Her he addressed in words of cheering  
sound;  
Recovering heart, like answer did she  
make;  
And well it was that, of the corse there  
found,  
In converse that ensued she nothing spake;  
She knew not what dire pangs in him such  
tale could wake.

XXII

But soon his voice and words of kind in-  
tent 190  
Banished that dismal thought; and now the  
wind  
In fainter howlings told its *rage* was spent:  
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various  
kind,  
Which by degrees a confidence of mind  
And mutual interest failed not to create.  
And, to a natural sympathy resigned,  
In that forsaken building where they sate  
The Woman thus retraced her own unto-  
ward fate.

XXIII

"By Derwent's side my father dwelt — a  
man  
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred;  
And I believe that, soon as I began 201  
To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,  
And in his hearing there my prayers I said:  
And afterwards, by my good father taught,  
I read, and loved the books in which I  
read;  
For books in every neighbouring house I  
sought,  
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure  
brought.

XXIV

"A little croft we owned — a plot of corn,  
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and  
thyme,  
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday morn  
Plucked while the church bells rang their  
earliest chime. 211  
Can I forget our freaks at shearing time!  
My hen's rich nest through long grass  
scarce espied;  
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy  
prime;

The swans that with white chests upreared  
in pride  
Rushing and racing came to meet me at the  
water-side.

XXV

"The staff I well remember which upbore  
The bending body of my active sire;  
His seat beneath the honied sycamore  
Where the bees hummed, and chair by  
winter fire; <sup>220</sup>  
When market-morning came, the neat  
attire  
With which, though bent on haste, myself  
I decked;  
Our watchful house-dog, that would tease  
and tire  
The stranger till its barking-fit I checked;  
The red-breast, known for years, which at  
my casement pecked.

XXVI

"The suns of twenty summers danced  
along,—  
Too little marked how fast they rolled  
away:  
But, through severe mischance and cruel  
wrong,  
My father's substance fell into decay:  
We toiled and struggled, hoping for a  
day <sup>230</sup>  
When Fortune might put on a kinder  
look;  
But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they;  
He from his old hereditary nook  
Must part; the summons came; — our final  
leave we took.

XXVII

"It was indeed a miserable hour  
When, from the last hill-top, my sire sur-  
veyed,  
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower  
That on his marriage day sweet music  
made!  
Till then, he hoped his bones might there  
be laid  
Close by my mother in their native bow-  
ers: <sup>240</sup>  
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and  
prayed; —  
I could not pray: — through tears that fell  
in showers  
Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas! no  
longer ours!

XXVIII

"There was a Youth whom I had loved so  
long,  
That when I loved him not I cannot say:  
'Mid the green mountains many a thought-  
less song  
We two had sung, like gladsome birds in  
May;  
When we began to tire of childish play,  
We seemed still more and more to prize  
each other;  
We talked of marriage and our marriage  
day; <sup>250</sup>  
And I in truth did love him like a bro-  
ther,  
For never could I hope to meet with such  
another.

XXIX

"Two years were passed since to a distant  
town  
He had repaired to ply a gainful trade:  
What tears of bitter grief, till then un-  
known!  
What tender vows, our last sad kiss de-  
layed!  
To him we turned: — we had no other  
aid:  
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept;  
And her whom he had loved in joy, he  
sail,  
He well could love in grief; his faith he  
kept; <sup>260</sup>  
And in a quiet home once more my father  
slept.

XXX

"We lived in peace and comfort; and were  
blest  
With daily bread, by constant toil sup-  
plied.  
Three lovely babes had lain upon my  
breast;  
And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I  
sighed,  
And knew not why. My happy father  
died,  
When threatened war reduced the children's  
meal:  
Thrice happy! that for him the grave  
could hide  
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent  
wheel,  
And tears that flowed for ills which patience  
might not heal. <sup>270</sup>

XXXI

"T was a hard change; an evil time was  
come;  
We had no hope, and no relief could gain:  
But some, with proud parade, the noisy  
drum  
Beat round to clear the streets of want and  
pain.  
My husband's arms now only served to  
strain  
Me and his children hungering in his view;  
In such dismay my prayers and tears were  
vain:  
To join those miserable men he flew,  
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers  
more, we drew.

XXXII

'There were we long neglected, and we  
bore<sup>280</sup>  
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor  
weighed;  
Green fields before us, and our native shore,  
We breathed a pestilential air, that made  
Ravage for which no knell was heard. We  
prayed  
For our departure; wished and wished —  
nor knew,  
'Mid that long sickness and those hopes  
delayed,  
That happier days we never more must  
view.  
The parting signal streamed — at last the  
land withdrew.

XXXIII

"But the calm summer season now was  
past.  
On as we drove, the equinoctial deep<sup>290</sup>  
Ran mountains high before the howling  
blast,  
And many perished in the whirlwind's  
sweep.  
We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,  
Untaught that soon such anguish must en-  
sue,  
Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,  
That we the mercy of the waves should rue:  
We reached the western world, a poor de-  
voted crew.

XXXIV

"The pains and plagues that on our heads  
came down,  
Disease and famine, agony and fear,<sup>299</sup>

In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,  
It would unman the firmest heart to hear.  
All perished — all in one remorseless year,  
Husband and children! one by one, by  
sword<sup>6</sup>  
And ravenous plague, all perished: every  
tear  
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board  
A British ship I waked, as from a trance  
restored."

XXXV

Here paused she, of all present thought for-  
lorn,  
Nor voice nor sound, that moment's pain  
expressed,  
Yet Nature, with excess of grief o'erborne,  
From her full eyes their watery load re-  
leased.<sup>310</sup>  
He too was mute; and, ere her weeping  
ceased,  
He rose, and to the ruin's portal went,  
And saw the dawn opening the silvery  
east  
With rays of promise, north and southward  
sent;  
And soon with crimson fire kindled the fir-  
nament.

XXXVI

"O come," he cried, "come, after weary  
night  
Of such rough storm, this happy change to  
view."  
So forth she came, and eastward looked;  
the sight  
Over her brow like dawn of gladness threw;  
Upon her cheek, to which its youthful hue  
Seemed to return, dried the last lingering  
tear.<sup>321</sup>  
And from her grateful heart a fresh one  
drew:  
The whilst her comrade to her pensive cheer  
Tempered fit words of hope; and the lark  
warbled near.

XXXVII

They looked and saw a lengthening road,  
and wain  
That rang down a bare slope not far re-  
mote:  
The barrows glistened bright with drops of  
rain,  
Whistled the waggoner with merry note,  
The cock far off sounded his clarion throat;

But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they  
viewed,<sup>330</sup>  
Only were told there stood a lonely cot  
A long mile thence. While thither they pur-  
sued  
Their way, the Woman thus her mournful  
tale renewed.

## XXXVIII

"Peaceful as this immeasurable plain  
Is now, by beams of dawning light im-  
prest,  
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering  
main;  
The very ocean hath its hour of rest.  
I too forgot the heavings of my breast.  
How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were!  
As quiet all within me. I was blest,<sup>340</sup>  
And looked, and fed upon the silent air  
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my de-  
spair.

## XXXIX

"Ah! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,  
And groans that rage of racking famine  
spoke;  
The unburied dead that lay in festering  
heaps,  
The breathing pestilence that rose like  
smoke,  
The shriek that from the distant battle  
broke,  
The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid  
host  
Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-  
stroke  
To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick an-  
guish tossed,<sup>350</sup>  
Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost!

## XL

"Some mighty gulf of separation past,  
I seemed transported to another world;  
A thought resigned with pain, when from  
the mast  
The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,  
And, whistling, called the wind that hardly  
curled  
The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts  
of home  
And from all hope I was for ever hurled.  
For me—farthest from earthly port to  
roam  
Was best, could I but shun the spot where  
man might come.<sup>360</sup>

## XLI

"And oft I thought (my fancy was so  
strong)  
That I, at last, a resting-place had found;  
'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole life  
long,  
Roaming the illimitable waters round;  
Here will I live, of all but heaven dis-  
owned,  
And end my days upon the peaceful flood.' —  
To break my dream the vessel reached its  
bound;  
And homeless near a thousand homes I  
stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined and want-  
ed food.

## XLII

"No help I sought; in sorrow turned adrift,  
Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare rock;  
Nor morsel to my mouth that day did  
lift,<sup>370</sup>  
Nor raised my hand at any door to knock.  
I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the  
cock  
From the cross-timber of an out-house  
hung;  
Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock!  
At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely  
stung,  
Nor to the beggar's language could I fit  
my tongue.

## XLIII

"So passed a second day; and, when the  
third  
Was come, I tried in vain the crowd's re-  
sort.<sup>380</sup>  
— In deep despair, by frightful wishes  
stirred,  
Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort;  
There, pains which nature could no more  
support,  
With blindness linked, did on my vitals  
fall;  
And, after many interruptions short  
Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could  
crawl:  
Unsought for was the help that did my life  
recall.

## XLIV

"Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain  
Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory;

I heard my neighbours in their beds com-  
plain<sup>390</sup>  
Of many things which never troubled me —  
Of feet still bustling round with busy  
glee,  
Of looks where common kindness had no  
part,  
Of service done with cold formality,  
Fretting the fever round the languid heart,  
And groans which, as they said, might  
make a dead man start.

## XLV

“These things just served to stir the slum-  
bering sense,  
Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.  
With strength did memory return; and,  
thence  
Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,<sup>400</sup>  
At houses, men, and common light, amazed.  
The lanes I sought, and, as the sun re-  
tired,  
Came where beneath the trees a faggot  
blazed,  
The travellers saw me weep, my fate in-  
quired,  
And gave me food — and rest, more wel-  
come, more desired.

## XLVI

“Rough potters seemed they, trading so-  
berly  
With panniered asses driven from door to  
door;  
But life of happier sort set forth to me,  
And other joys my fancy to allure —<sup>409</sup>  
The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor  
In barn uplighted; and companionous boon,  
Well met from far with revelry secure  
Among the forest glades, while jocund June  
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and  
genial moon.

## XLVII

“But ill they suited me — those journeys  
dark  
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to  
hatch!  
To charm the surly house-dog's faithful  
bark,  
Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.  
The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue  
match,  
The black disguise, the warning whistle  
shrill,<sup>420</sup>

And ear still busy on its nightly watch,  
Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill:  
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts  
were brooding still.

## XLVIII

“What could I do, unaided and unblest?  
My father! gone was every friend of thine:  
And kindred of dead husband are at best  
Small help; and, after marriage such as  
mine,  
With little kindness would to me incline.  
Nor was I then for toil or service fit;  
My deep-drawn sighs no effort could con-  
fine;<sup>430</sup>  
In open air forgetful would I sit  
Whole hours, with idle arms in moping sor-  
row knit.

## XLIX

“The roads I paced, I loitered through the  
fields;  
Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused.  
Trusted my life to what chance bounty  
yields,  
Now coldly given, now utterly refused.  
The ground I for my bed have often used:  
But what afflicts my peace with keenest  
ruth,  
Is that I have my inner self abused,  
Foregone the home delight of constant  
truth,<sup>440</sup>  
And clear and open soul, so prized in fear-  
less youth.

## L

“Through tears the rising sun I oft have  
viewed,  
Through tears have seen him towards that  
world descend  
Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude:  
Three years a wanderer now my course I  
bend —  
Oh! tell me whither — for no earthly friend  
Have I.” — She ceased, and weeping turned  
away;  
As if because her tale was at an end,  
She wept; because she had no more to say  
Of that perpetual weight which on her  
spirit lay.<sup>450</sup>

## LI

True sympathy the Sailor's looks expressed,  
His looks — for pondering he was mute the  
while.



Of social Order's care for wretchedness,  
Of Time's sure help to calm and recon-  
cile,  
Joy's second spring and Hope's long-trea-  
sured smile,  
'Twas not for *him* to speak — a man so  
tried.

Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly style  
Proverbial words of comfort he applied,  
And not in vain, while they went pacing  
side by side.

## LII

Erelong, from heaps of turf, before their  
sight, 460  
Together smoking in the sun's slant beam,  
Rise various wreaths that into one unite  
Which high and higher mounts with silver  
gleam :  
Fair spectacle, — but instantly a scream  
Thence bursting shrill did all remark pre-  
vent ;  
They paused, and heard a hoarser voice  
blaspheme,  
And female cries. Their course they  
thither bent,  
And met a man who foamed with anger  
vehement.

## LIII

A woman stood with quivering lips and pale,  
And, pointing to a little child that lay 470  
Stretched on the ground, began a piteous  
tale ;  
How in a simple freak of thoughtless play  
He had provoked his father, who straight-  
way,  
As if each blow were deadlier than the  
last,  
Struck the poor innocent. Pallid with dis-  
may  
The Soldier's Widow heard and stood  
aghast ;  
And stern looks on the man her grey-  
haired Comrade cast.

## LIV

His voice with indignation rising high  
Such further deed in manhood's name for-  
bade ;  
The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
With bitter insult and revilings sad ; 481  
Asked him in scorn what business there he  
had ;  
What kind of plunder he was hunting now ;

The gallows would one day of him be  
glad ; —  
Though inward anguish damped the Sail-  
or's brow,  
Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so poign-  
ant would allow.

## LV

Softly he stroked the child, who lay out-  
stretched  
With face to earth ; and, as the boy turned  
round  
His battered head, a groan the Sailor fetched  
As if he saw — there and upon that ground —  
Strange repetition of the deadly wound  
He had himself inflicted. Through his  
brain 492  
At once the griding iron passage found ;  
Deluge of tender thoughts then rushed  
amain,  
Nor could his sunken eyes the starting tear  
restrain.

## LVI

Within himself he said — What hearts have  
we !  
The blessing this a father gives his child !  
Yet happy thou, poor boy ! compared with  
me,  
Suffering not doing ill — fate far more  
mild.  
The stranger's looks and tears of wrath be-  
guiled 500  
The father, and relenting thoughts awoke ;  
He kissed his son — so all was recon-  
ciled.  
Then, with a voice which inward trouble  
broke  
Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor then be-  
spoke.

## LVII

"Bad is the world, and hard is the world's  
law  
Even for the man who wears the warmest  
fleece ;  
Much need have ye that time more closely  
draw  
The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,  
And that among so few there still be peace :  
Else can ye hope but with such numerous  
foes 510  
Your pains shall ever with your years in-  
crease ?" —

While from his heart the appropriate lesson  
flows,  
A correspondent calm stole gently o'er his  
woes.

LVIII

Forthwith the pair passed on ; and down  
they look  
Into a narrow valley's pleasant scene  
Where wreaths of vapour tracked a wind-  
ing brook,  
That babbled on through groves and mead-  
ows green ;  
A low-roofed house peeped out the trees  
between ;  
The dripping groves resound with cheerful  
lays,  
And melancholy lowings intervene 520  
Of scattered herds, that in the meadow  
graze,  
Some amid lingering shade, some touched  
by the sun's rays.

LIX

They saw and heard, and, winding with the  
road,  
Down a thick wood, they dropt into the  
vale ;  
Comfort, by prouder mansions unbestowed,  
Their wearied frames, she hoped, would  
soon regale.  
Erelong they reached that cottage in the  
dale :  
It was a rustic inn ; — the board was spread,  
The milk-maid followed with her brimming  
pail,  
And lustily the master carved the bread,  
Kindly the housewife pressed, and they in  
comfort fed. 531

LX

Their breakfast done, the pair, though loth,  
must part ;  
Wanderers whose course no longer now  
agrees.  
She rose and bade farewell ! and, while her  
heart  
Struggled with tears nor could its sorrow  
case,  
She left him there ; for, clustering round  
his knees,  
With his oak-staff the cottage children  
played ;  
And soon she reached a spot o'erhung with  
trees

And banks of ragged earth ; beneath the  
shade  
Across the pebbly road a little runnel  
strayed. 540

LXI

A cart and horse beside the rivulet stood ;  
Chequering the canvas roof the sunbeams  
shone.  
She saw the carman bend to scoop the flood  
As the wain fronted her, — wherein lay  
one,  
A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.  
The carman wet her lips as well behaved ;  
Bed under her lean body there was none ;  
Though even to die near one she most had  
loved,  
She could not of herself those wasted limbs  
have moved.

LXII

The Soldier's Widow learned with honest  
pain 550  
And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,  
Why thus that worn-out wretch must there  
sustain  
The jolting road and morning air severe.  
The wain pursued its way ; and following  
near  
In pure compassion she her steps retraced  
Far as the cottage. " A sad sight is here,"  
She cried aloud ; and forth ran out in haste  
The friends whom she had left but a few  
minutes past.

LXIII

While to the door with eager speed they ran,  
From her bare straw the Woman half up-  
raised 560  
Her bony visage — gaunt and deadly wan ;  
No pity asking, on the group she gazed  
With a dim eye, distracted and amazed ;  
Then sank upon her straw with feeble moan.  
Fervently cried the housewife — " God be  
praised,  
I have a house that I can call my own ;  
Nor shall she perish there, untended and  
alone ! "

LXIV

So in they bear her to the chimney seat,  
And busily, though yet with fear, untie  
Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet  
And chafe her temples, careful hands apply.  
Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh

She strove, and not in vain, her head to rear;  
 Then said — "I thank you all; if I must die,  
 The God in heaven my prayers for you will hear;  
 Till now I did not think my end had been so near.

## LXV

"Barred every comfort labour could procure,  
 Suffering what no endurance could assuage,  
 I was compelled to seek my father's door,  
 Though loth to be a burthen on his age. 580  
 But sickness stopped me in an early stage  
 Of my sad journey; and within the wain  
 They placed me — there to end life's pilgrimage,  
 Unless beneath your roof I may remain;  
 For I shall never see my father's door again.

## LXVI

"My life, Heaven knows, hath long been burthensome;  
 But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek  
 May my end be! Soon will this voice be dumb:  
 Should child of mine e'er wander hither, speak  
 Of me, say that the worm is on my cheek. —  
 Torn from our hut, that stood beside the sea 591  
 Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome creek,  
 My husband served in sad captivity  
 On shipboard, bound till peace or death  
 should set him free.

## LXVII

"A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,  
 Yet two sweet little ones partook my bed;  
 Hope cheered my dreams, and to my daily prayers  
 Our heavenly Father granted each day's bread;  
 Till one was found by stroke of violence dead,  
 Whose body near our cottage chanced to lie; 600  
 A dire suspicion drove us from our shed;  
 In vain to find a friendly face we try,  
 Nor could we live together those poor boys  
 and I;

## LXVIII

"For evil tongues made oath how on that day  
 My husband lurked about the neighbourhood;  
 Now he had fled, and whither none could say,  
 And he had done the deed in the dark wood —  
 Near his own home! — but he was mild and good;  
 Never on earth was gentler creature seen;  
 He'd not have robbed the raven of its food.  
 My husband's lovingkindness stood between  
 Me and all worldly harms and wrongs how-  
 ever keen." 612

## LXIX

Alas! the thing she told with labouring breath  
 The Sailor knew too well. That wickedness  
 His hand had wrought; and when, in the hour of death,  
 He saw his Wife's lips move his name to bless  
 With her last words, unable to suppress  
 His anguish, with his heart he ceased to strive;  
 And, weeping loud in this extreme distress,  
 He cried — "Do pity me! That thou shouldst live 620  
 I neither ask nor wish — forgive me, but forgive!"

## LXX

To tell the change that Voice within her wrought  
 Nature by sign or sound made no essay;  
 A sudden joy surprised expiring thought,  
 And every mortal pang dissolved away.  
 Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay;  
 Yet still while over her the husband bent,  
 A look was in her face which seemed to say,  
 "Be blest; by sight of thee from heaven was sent  
 Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of content." 630

## LXXI

She slept in peace, — his pulses throbbed  
 and stopped,  
 Breathless he gazed upon her face, — then  
 took  
 Her hand in his, and raised it, but both  
 dropped,

When on his own he cast a rueful look.  
His ears were never silent; sleep forsook  
His burning eyelids stretched and stiff as  
lead;  
All night from time to time under him shook  
The floor as he lay shuddering on his bed;  
And oft he groaned aloud, "O God, that I  
were dead!"

LXXII

The Soldier's Widow lingered in the cot,  
And, when he rose, he thanked her pious  
care  
Through which his Wife, to that kind shelter brought,  
Died in his arms; and with those thanks a  
prayer  
He breathed for her, and for that merciful  
pair.  
The corse interred, not one hour he re-  
mained  
Beneath their roof, but to the open air  
A burthen, now with fortitude sustained,  
He bore within a breast where dreadful  
quiet reigned.

LXXIII

Confirmed of purpose, fearlessly prepared  
For act and suffering, to the city straight  
He journeyed, and forthwith his crime  
declared:  
"And from your doom," he added, "now I  
wait,  
Nor let it linger long, the murderer's fate."  
Not ineffectual was that piteous claim;  
"O welcome sentence which will end though  
late,"  
He said, "the pangs that to my conscience  
came  
Out of that deed. My trust, Saviour! is in  
thy name!"

LXXIV

His fate was pitied. Him in iron case  
(Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)  
They hung not: — no one on his form or face  
Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought;  
No kindred sufferer, to his death-place  
brought  
By lawless curiosity or chance,  
When into storm the evening sky is  
wrought,  
Upon his swinging corse an eye can glance,  
And drop, as he once dropped, in miserable  
trance.

LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE,  
WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF  
ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF  
THE SHORE, COMMANDING A BEAUTI-  
FUL PROSPECT

1795. 1798

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead.  
The tree has disappeared, and the slip of  
Common on which it stood, that ran parallel to  
the lake and lay open to it, has long been en-  
closed; so that the road has lost much of its  
attraction. This spot was my favourite walk  
in the evenings during the latter part of my  
school-time. The individual whose habits and  
character are here given, was a gentleman of  
the neighborhood, a man of talent and learn-  
ing, who had been educated at one of our Uni-  
versities, and returned to pass his time in  
seclusion on his own estate. He died a bachelor  
in middle age. Induced by the beauty of the  
prospect, he built a small summer-house on the  
rocks above the peninsula on which the ferry-  
house stands. This property afterwards passed  
into the hands of the late Mr. Curwen. The  
site was long ago pointed out by Mr. West in  
his Guide, as the pride of the lakes, and now  
goes by the name of "The Station." So much  
used I to be delighted with the view from it,  
while a little boy, that some years before the  
first pleasure-house was built, I led thither  
from Hawkshead a youngster about my own  
age, an Irish boy, who was a servant to an  
itinerant conjuror. My motive was to witness  
the pleasure I expected the boy would receive  
from the prospect of the islands below and the  
intermingling water. I was not disappointed;  
and I hope the fact, insignificant as it may ap-  
pear to some, may be thought worthy of note  
by others who may cast their eye over these  
notes.

NAY, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-  
tree stands  
Far from all human dwelling: what if  
here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant  
herb?  
What if the bee love not these barren  
boughs?  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling  
waves,  
That break against the shore, shall lull thy  
mind  
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

Who he was  
 That piled these stones and with the mossy  
 sod  
 First covered, and here taught this aged  
 Tree  
 With its dark arms to form a circling  
 bower,  
 I well remember. — He was one who owned  
 No common soul. In youth by science  
 nursed,  
 And led by nature into a wild scene  
 Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth  
 A favoured Being, knowing no desire  
 Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the  
 taint  
 Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and  
 hate,  
 And scorn, — against all enemies prepared,  
 All but neglect. The world, for so it  
 thought,  
 Owed him no service; wherefore he at  
 once  
 With indignation turned himself away,  
 And with the food of pride sustained his  
 soul  
 In solitude. — Stranger! these gloomy  
 boughs  
 Had charms for him; and here he loved to  
 sit,  
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
 The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:  
 And on these barren rocks, with fern and  
 heath,  
 And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an  
 hour  
 A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life:  
 And, lifting up his head, he then would  
 gaze  
 On the more distant scene, — how lovely  
 'tis

Thou seest, — and he would gaze till it  
 became  
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain  
 The beauty, still more beautiful! Nor,  
 that time,  
 When nature had subdued him to herself,  
 Would he forget those Beings to whose  
 minds,  
 Warm from the labours of benevolence,  
 The world, and human life, appeared a  
 scene  
 Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh,  
 Inly disturbed, to think that others felt  
 What he must never feel: and so, lost  
 Man!  
 On visionary views would fancy feed,  
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this  
 deep vale  
 He died, — this seat his only monument.  
 If Thou be one whose heart the holy  
 forms  
 Of young imagination have kept pure,  
 Stranger! henceforth be warned; and  
 know that pride,  
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
 Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
 For any living thing, hath faculties  
 Which he has never used; that thought  
 with him  
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
 The least of Nature's works, one who  
 might move  
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom  
 holds  
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to  
 love;  
 True dignity abides with him alone  
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
 In lowliness of heart.

## THE BORDERERS

## A TRAGEDY

1795-96. 1842

Of this dramatic work I have little to say in addition to the short note which will be found at the end of the volume. It was composed at Racedown in Dorsetshire during the latter part of the year 1795, and in the course of the following year. Had it been the work of a later period of life, it would have been different in some respects from what it is now. The plot would have been something more complex, and a greater variety of characters introduced to relieve the mind from the pressure of incidents so mournful. The manners also would have been more attended to. My care was almost exclusively given to the passions and the characters, and the position in which the persons in the Drama stood relatively to each other, that the reader (for I had then no thought of the Stage) might be moved, and to a degree instructed, by lights penetrating somewhat into the depths of our nature. In this endeavour, I cannot think, upon a very late review, that I have failed. As to the scene and period of action, little more was required for my purpose than the absence of established law and government; so that the agents might be at liberty to act on their own impulses. Nevertheless I do remember that, having a wish to colour the manners in some degree from local history more than my knowledge enabled me to do, I read Redpath's History of the Borders, but found there nothing to my purpose. I once made an observation to Sir Walter Scott, in which he concurred, that it was difficult to conceive how so dull a book could be written on such a subject. Much about the same time, but a little after, Coleridge was employed in writing his tragedy of "Remorse," and it happened that soon after, through one of the Mr. Pooles, Mr. Knight the actor heard that we had been engaged in writing Plays, and upon his suggestion mine was curtailed, and I believe Coleridge's also was offered to Mr. Harris, manager of Covent Garden. For myself, I had no hope nor even a wish (though a successful play would, in the then state of my finances, have been a most welcome piece of good fortune) that he should accept my performance; so that I incurred no disappointment when the piece was *judiciously* returned as not calculated for the Stage. In this judgment I entirely concurred, and had it been otherwise, it was so natural for me to shrink from public notice, that any hope I might have had of success would not have reconciled me altogether to such an exhibition. Mr. C.'s Play was, as is well known, brought forward several years after through the kindness of Mr. Sheridan. In conclusion I may observe that while I was composing this Play I wrote a short essay illustrative of that constitution and those tendencies of human nature which make the apparently *motiveless* actions of bad men intelligible to careful observers. This was partly done with reference to the character of Oswald, and his persevering endeavour to lead the man he disliked into so heinous a crime; but still more to preserve in my distinct remembrance what I had observed of transition in character, and the reflections I had been led to make during the time I was a witness of the changes through which the French Revolution passed.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MARMADUKE	} <i>Of the Band of Borderers.</i>
OSWALD	
WALLACE	
LACY	
LENNOX	
HERBERT.	
WILFRED, <i>Servant to Marmaduke.</i>	
Host.	
Forester.	
ELDRÉD, <i>a Peasant.</i>	
PEASANT, <i>Pilgrims, etc.</i>	
IDONEA.	
Female Beggar.	
ELIZABETH, <i>Wife to Eldred.</i>	

SCENE — *Borders of England and Scotland.*TIME — *The Reign of Henry III.*

Readers already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition,

some eight or ten lines which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper, however, to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 28, 1842.

## ACT I

SCENE — *Road in a Wood*

WALLACE and LACY

Lacy. The troop will be impatient; let us hie

Back to our post, and strip the Scottish Foray

Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the Border.

—Pity that our young Chief will have no part

In this good service.

*Wal.* Rather let us grieve That, in the undertaking which has caused His absence, he hath sought, whate'er his aim,

Companionship with One of crooked ways, From whose perverted soul can come no good

To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader. *Lacy.* True; and, remembering how the Band have proved

That Oswald finds small favour in our sight,

Well may we wonder he has gained such power

Over our much-loved Captain.

*Wal.* I have heard Of some dark deed to which in early life His passion drove him — then a Voyager Upon the midland Sea. You knew his bearing In Palestine?

*Lacy.* Where he despised alike Mahomedan and Christian. But enough; Let us begone — the Band may else be foiled. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED.*

*Wil.* Be cautious, my dear Master!

*Mar.* I perceive That fear is like a cloak which old men huddle

About their love, as if to keep it warm.

*Wil.* Nay, but I grieve that we should part. This Stranger,

For such he is —

*Mar.* Your busy fancies, Wilfred, Might tempt me to a smile; but what of him?

*Wil.* You know that you have saved his life.

*Mar.* I know it.

*Wil.* And that he hates you! — Pardon me, perhaps That word was hasty.

*Mar.* Fy! no more of it.

*Wil.* Dear Master! gratitude's a heavy burden To a proud Soul. — Nobody loves this Oswald —

Yourself, you do not love him.

*Mar.*

I do more, I honour him. Strong feelings to his heart Are natural; and from no one can be learnt More of man's thoughts and ways than his experience

Has given him power to teach: and then for courage

And enterprise — what perils hath he shunned?

What obstacles hath he failed to overcome? Answer these questions, from our common knowledge,

And be at rest.

*Wil.* Oh, Sir!

*Mar.* Peace, my good Wilfred; Repair to Liddesdale, and tell the Band I shall be with them in two days, at farthest.

*Wil.* May He whose eye is over all protect you! [*Exit.*]

*Enter OSWALD (a bunch of plants in his hand).*

*Osw.* This wood is rich in plants and curious simples.

*Mar. (looking at them).* The wild rose, and the poppy, and the nightshade: Which is your favourite, Oswald?

*Osw.* That which, while it is Strong to destroy, is also strong to heal —

[*Looking forward.*]  
Not yet in sight! — We'll saunter here awhile;

They cannot mount the hill, by us unseen.

*Mar. (a letter in his hand).* It is no common thing when one like you Performs these delicate services, and therefore

I feel myself much bounden to you, Oswald; 'Tis a strange letter this! — You saw her write it?

*Osw.* And saw the tears with which she blotted it.

*Mar.* And nothing less would satisfy him?

*Osw.* No less;

For that another in his Child's affection Should hold a place, as if 't were robbery, He seemed to quarrel with the very thought.

Besides, I know not what strange prejudice Is rooted in his mind; this Band of ours, 60 Which you've collected for the noblest ends,

Along the confines of the Esk and Tweed

To guard the Innocent — he calls us "Out-laws";

And, for yourself, in plain terms he asserts  
This garb was taken up that indolence  
Might want no cover, and rapacity  
Be better fed.

*Mar.* Ne'er may I own the heart  
That cannot feel for one, helpless as he is.

*Osw.* Thou know'st me for a Man not  
easily moved,  
Yet was I grievously provoked to think 70  
Of what I witnessed.

*Mar.* This day will suffice  
To end her wrongs.

*Osw.* But if the blind Man's tale  
Should yet be true?

*Mar.* Would it were possible!  
Did not the soldier tell thee that himself,  
And others who survived the wreck, beheld  
The Baron Herbert perish in the waves  
Upon the coast of Cyprus?

*Osw.* Yes, even so,  
And I had heard the like before: in sooth  
The tale of this his quondam Barony  
Is cunningly devised; and, on the back 80  
Of his forlorn appearance, could not fail  
To make the proud and vain his tributaries,  
And stir the pulse of lazy charity.  
The seigniors of Herbert are in Devon;  
We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed: 'tis  
much

The Arch-Impostor —

*Mar.* Treat him gently, Oswald;  
Though I have never seen his face, methinks,  
There cannot come a day when I shall  
cease

To love him. I remember, when a Boy  
Of scarcely seven years' growth, beneath  
the Elm 90

That casts its shade over our village school,  
'Twas my delight to sit and hear Idonea  
Repeat her Father's terrible adventures,  
Till all the band of playmates wept together;

And that was the beginning of my love.  
And, through all converse of our later  
years,

An image of this old Man still was present,  
When I had been most happy. Pardon me  
If this be idly spoken.

*Osw.* See, they come, 99

Two Travellers!

*Mar.* (*points*). The woman is Idonea.

*Osw.* And leading Herbert.

*Mar.* We must let them pass —  
This thicket will conceal us.

[*They step aside.*]

*Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.*

*Idon.* Dear Father, you sigh deeply;  
ever since

We left the willow shade by the brook-side,  
Your natural breathing has been troubled.

*Her.* Nay,

You are too fearful; yet must I confess,  
Our march of yesterday had better suited  
A firmer step than mine.

*Idon.* That dismal Moor —

In spite of all the larks that cheered our  
path,

I never can forgive it: but how steadily  
You paced along, when the bewildering  
moonlight 111

Mocked me with many a strange fantastic  
shape! —

I thought the Convent never would appear;  
It seemed to move away from us: and yet,  
That you are thus the fault is mine; for  
the air

Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the  
grass,

And midway on the waste ere night had  
fallen

I spied a Covert walled and roofed with  
sods —

A miniature; belike some Shepherd-  
boy,

Who might have found a nothing-doing  
hour

Heavier than work, raised it: within that hut  
We might have made a kindly bed of heath  
And thankfully there rested side by side

Wrapped in our cloaks, and, with recruited  
strength,

Have hailed the morning sun. But cheerily,  
Father, —

That staff of yours, I could almost have  
heart

To fling 't away from you: you make no use  
Of me, or of my strength; — come, let me  
feel

That you do press upon me. There — in-  
deed

You are quite exhausted. Let us rest  
awhile 130

On this green bank. [*He sits down.*]

*Her.* (*after some time*). Idonea, you are  
silent,

And I divine the cause.



*Idon.* Do not reproach me :  
 I pondered patiently your wish and will  
 When I gave way to your request; and  
 now,  
 When I behold 'the ruins of that face,  
 Those eyeballs dark — dark beyond hope of  
 light,  
 And think that they were blasted for my  
 sake,  
 The name of Marmaduke is blown away:  
 Father, I would not change that sacred  
 feeling 139  
 For all this world can give.

*Her.* Nay, be composed:  
 Few minutes gone a faintness overspread  
 My frame, and I bethought me of two  
 things  
 I ne'er had heart to separate — my grave,  
 And thee, my Child !

*Idon.* Believe me, honoured Sire !  
 'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy  
 fancies,  
 And you mistake the cause: you hear the  
 woods  
 Resound with music, could you see the sun,  
 And look upon the pleasant face of Na-  
 ture —

*Her.* I comprehend thee — I should be  
 as cheerful  
 As if we two were twins ; two songsters  
 bred 150  
 In the same nest, my spring-time one with  
 thine.  
 My fancies, fancies if they be, are such  
 As come, dear Child ! from a far deeper  
 source

Than bodily weariness. While here we sit  
 I feel my strength returning. — The be-  
 quest

Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive  
 We have thus far adventured, will suffice  
 To save thee from the extreme of penury ;  
 But when thy Father must lie down and  
 die

How wilt thou stand alone ?

*Idon.* Is he not strong ?  
 Is he not valiant ?

*Her.* Am I then so soon 161  
 Forgotten ? have my warnings passed so  
 quickly

Out of thy mind ? My dear, my only,  
 Child ;

Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed —  
 This Marmaduke —

*Idon.* O could you hear his voice:

Alas ! you do not know him. He is one  
 (I wot not what ill tongue has wronged him  
 with you)

All gentleness and love. His face bespeaks  
 A deep and simple meekness : and that  
 Soul,

Which with the motion of a virtuous act  
 Flashes a look of terror upon guilt, 171  
 Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,  
 By a miraculous finger, stilled at once.

*Her.* Unhappy Woman !

*Idon.* Nay, it was my duty  
 Thus much to speak ; but think not I for-  
 get —

Dear Father ! how *could* I forget and live —  
 You and the story of that doleful night  
 When, Antioch blazing to her topmost  
 towers,

You rushed into the murderous flames, re-  
 turned

Blind as the grave, but, as you oft have  
 told me, 180

Clasping your infant Daughter to your  
 heart.

*Her.* Thy Mother too ! — scarce had I  
 gained the door,  
 I caught her voice ; she threw herself upon  
 me,

I felt thy infant brother in her arms ;  
 She saw my blasted face — a tide of sol-  
 diers

That instant rushed between us, and I heard  
 Her last death-shriek, distinct among a  
 thousand.

*Idon.* Nay, Father, stop not ; let me hear  
 it all.

*Her.* Dear Daughter ! precious relic of  
 that time —

For my old age, it doth remain with thee  
 To make it what thou wilt. Thou hast  
 been told, 191

That when, on our return from Palestine,  
 I found how my domains had been usurped,  
 I took thee in my arms, and we began  
 Our wanderings together. Providence

At length conducted us to Rossland, —  
 there,

Our melancholy story moved a Stranger  
 To take thee to her home — and for myself,  
 Soon after, the good Abbot of St. Cuth-  
 bert's

Supplied my helplessness with food and rai-  
 ment, 200

And, as thou know'st, gave me that hum-  
 ble Cot

Where now we dwell. — For many years I bore

Thy absence, till old age and fresh infirmities

Exacted thy return, and our reunion.

I did not think that, during that long absence,

My Child, forgetful of the name of Herbert,  
Had given her love to a wild Freebooter,  
Who here, upon the borders of the Tweed,  
Doth prey alike on two distracted Coun-  
tries, 209

Traitor to both.

*Idon.* Oh, could you hear his voice !  
I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me,  
But let this kiss speak what is in my heart.

*Enter a PEASANT.*

*Pea.* Good morrow, Strangers ! If you want a Guide,

Let me have leave to serve you !

*Idon.* My Companion  
Hath need of rest ; the sight of Hut or  
Hostel

Would be most welcome.

*Pea.* Yon white hawthorn gained,  
You will look down into a dell, and there  
Will see an ash from which a sign-board  
hangs ;

The house is hidden by the shade. Old  
Man,

You seem worn out with travel — shall I  
support you ? 220

*Her.* I thank you ; but, a resting-place  
so near,

'T were wrong to trouble you.

*Pea.* God speed you both.  
[*Exit Peasant.*]

*Her.* Idonea, we must part. Be not  
alarmed —

'T is but for a few days — a thought has  
struck me.

*Idon.* That I should leave you at this  
house, and thence

Proceed alone. It shall be so ; for strength  
Would fail you ere our journey's end be  
reached.

[*Exit Herbert supported by Idonea.*]

*Re-enter MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

*Mar.* This instant will we stop him —

*Osw.* Be not hasty,  
For, sometimes, in despite of my conviction,

He tempted me to think the Story true ; 230

'T is plain he loves the Maid, and what he  
said

That savoured of aversion to thy name  
Appeared the genuine colour of his soul —  
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her  
After his death.

*Mar.* I have been much deceived.

*Osw.* But sure he loves the Maiden, and  
never love

Could find delight to nurse itself so strange-  
ly,

Thus to torment her with inventions ! —  
death —

There must be truth in this.

*Mar.* Truth in his story !  
He must have felt it then, known what it

was, 240  
And in such wise to rack her gentle heart  
Had been a tenfold cruelty.

*Osw.* Strange pleasures  
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves !  
To see him thus provoke her tenderness  
With tales of weakness and infirmity !  
I'd wager on his life for twenty years.

*Mar.* We will not waste an hour in such  
a cause.

*Osw.* Why, this is noble ! shake her off  
at once.

*Mar.* Her virtues are his instruments. —  
A Man

Who has so practised on the world's cold  
sense, 250

May well deceive his Child — what ! leave  
her thus,

A prey to a deceiver ? — no — no — no —  
'T is but a word and then —

*Osw.* Something is here  
More than we see, or whence this strong  
aversion ?

Marmaduke ! I suspect unworthy tales  
Have reached his ear — you have had ene-  
mies.

*Mar.* Enemies ! — of his own coinage.

*Osw.* That may be,  
But wherefore slight protection such as you  
Have power to yield ? perhaps he looks  
elsewhere, —

I am perplexed.

*Mar.* What hast thou heard or seen ?

*Osw.* No — no — the thing stands clear  
of mystery ; 261

(As you have said) he coins himself the  
slander

With which he taints her ear ; — for a plain  
reason ;

He dreads the presence of a virtuous man  
Like you; he knows your eye would search  
his heart,

Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds  
The punishment they merit. All is plain:  
It cannot be —

*Mar.* What cannot be ?

*Osw.* Yet that a Father  
Should in his love admit no rivalry,  
And torture thus the heart of his own  
Child — 270

*Mar.* Nay, you abuse my friendship !

*Osw.* Heaven forbid ! —  
There was a circumstance, trifling indeed —  
It struck me at the time — yet I believe  
I never should have thought of it again  
But for the scene which we by chance have  
witnessed.

*Mar.* What is your meaning ?

*Osw.* Two days gone I saw,  
Though at a distance and he was disguised,  
Hovering round Herbert's door, a man  
whose figure  
Resembled much that cold voluptuary,  
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and he  
knows 280

Where he can stab you deepest.

*Mar.* Clifford never  
Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage door —  
It could not be.

*Osw.* And yet I now remember,  
That, when your praise was warm upon my  
tongue,  
And the blind Man was told how you had  
rescued

A maiden from the ruffian violence  
Of this same Clifford, he became impatient  
And would not hear me.

*Mar.* No — it cannot be —  
I dare not trust myself with such a  
thought —

Yet whence this strange aversion ? You  
are a man 290  
Not used to rash conjectures —

*Osw.* If you deem it  
A thing worth further notice, we must act  
With caution, sift the matter artfully.

[*Exeunt Marmaduke and Oswald.*]

SCENE — *The Door of the Hostel*

HERBERT, IDONEA, and HOST.

*Her. (seated).* As I am dear to you, re-  
member, Child !  
This last request.

*Idon.* You know me, Sire; farewell !

*Her.* And are you going then ? Come,  
come, Idonea,

We must not part, — I have measured many  
a league

When these old limbs had need of rest, —  
and now

I will not play the sluggard.

*Idon.* Nay, sit down.

[*Turning to Host.*]

Good Host, such tendance as you would  
expect 300

From your own Children, if yourself were  
sick,

Let this old Man find at your hands; poor  
Leader, [Looking at the dog.

We soon shall meet again. If thou neglect  
This charge of thine, then ill befall thee ! —

Look,

The little fool is loth to stay behind.

Sir Host ! by all the love you bear to cour-  
tesy,

Take care of him, and feed the truant well.

*Host.* Fear not, I will obey you; — but

One so young,

And One so fair, it goes against my heart

That you should travel unattended, Lady ! —

I have a palfrey and a groom: the lad 311  
Shall squire you, (would it not be better,

Sir ?)

And for less fee than I would let him run  
For any lady I have seen this twelvemonth.

*Idon.* You know, Sir, I have been too  
long your guard

Not to have learnt to laugh at little fears.

Why, if a wolf should leap from out a  
thicket,

A look of mine would send him scouring  
back,

Unless I differ from the thing I am 319  
When you are by my side.

*Her.* Idonea, wolves

Are not the enemies that move my fears.

*Idon.* No more, I pray, of this. Three  
days at farthest

Will bring me back — protect him, Saints  
— farewell ! [*Exit Idonea.*]

*Host.* 'Tis never drought with us — St.  
Cuthbert and his Pilgrims,

Thanks to them, are to us a stream of com-  
fort:

Pity the Maiden did not wait a while;

She could not, Sir, have failed of company.

*Her.* Now she is gone, I fain would call  
her back.

*Host (calling).* Holla !

*Her.* No, no, the business must be done. —

What means this riotous noise?

*Host.* The villagers  
Are flocking in — a wedding festival — 331  
That's all — God save you, Sir.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha! as I live,  
The Baron Herbert.

*Host.* Mercy, the Baron Herbert !

*Osw.* So far into your journey ! on my life,  
You are a lusty Traveller. But how fare  
you?

*Her.* Well as the wreck I am permits.  
And you, Sir?

*Osw.* I do not see Idonea.

*Her.* Dutiful Girl,  
She is gone before, to spare my weariness.  
But what has brought you hither?

*Osw.* A slight affair,  
That will be soon despatched.

*Her.* Did Marmaduke  
Receive that letter?

*Osw.* Be at peace. — The tie 341  
Is broken, you will hear no more of him.

*Her.* This is true comfort, thanks a thou-  
sand times! —

That noise! — would I had gone with her  
as far

As the Lord Clifford's Castle: I have heard  
That, in his milder moods, he has expressed  
Compassion for me. His influence is great  
With Henry, our good King; — the Baron  
might

Have heard my suit, and urged my plea at  
Court.

No matter — he's a dangerous Man. — That  
noise ! — 350

'Tis too disorderly for sleep or rest.

Idonea would have fears for me, — the Con-  
vent

Will give me quiet lodging. You have a  
boy, good Host,

And he must lead me back.

*Osw.* You are most lucky;  
I have been waiting in the wood hard by  
For a companion — here he comes; our  
journey

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

Lies on your way; accept us as your  
Guides.

*Her.* Alas ! I creep so slowly.

*Osw.* Never fear;  
We'll not complain of that.

*Her.* My limbs are stiff  
And need repose. Could you but wait an  
hour ? 360

*Osw.* Most willingly ! — Come, let me  
lead you in,  
And, while you take your rest, think not of  
us;

We'll stroll into the wood; lean on my arm.

[*Conducts Herbert into the house. Exit  
Marmaduke.*]

*Enter Villagers.*

*Osw. (to himself coming out of the Hostel).*

I have prepared a most apt Instru-  
ment —

The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loitering  
somewhere

About this ground; she hath a tongue well  
skilled,

By mingling natural matter of her own  
With all the daring fictions I have taught  
her,

To win belief, such as my plot requires.

[*Exit Oswald.*]

*Enter more Villagers, a Musician among  
them.*

*Host (to them).* Into the court, my Friend,  
and perch yourself 370

Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids,  
Garlands and flowers, and cakes and merry  
thoughts,

Are here, to send the sun into the west  
More speedily than you belike would wish.

*SCENE changes to the Wood adjoining the  
Hostel*

*MARMADUKE and OSWALD entering.*

*Mar.* I would fain hope that we deceive  
ourselves:

When first I saw him sitting there, alone,  
It struck upon my heart I know not how.

*Osw.* To-day will clear up all. — You  
marked a Cottage, 378

That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a rock  
By the brook-side: it is the abode of One,

A Maiden innocent till ensnared by Clifford,  
Who soon grew weary of her; but, alas !

What she had seen and suffered turned her  
brain.

Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells alone,

Nor moves her hands to any needful work:  
She eats her food which every day the  
peasants

Bring to her hut; and so the Wretch has  
lived

Ten years; and no one ever heard her voice;  
But every night at the first stroke of twelve  
She quits her house, and, in the neighbour-  
ing Churchyard

Upon the self-same spot, in rain or storm,  
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and  
one —

She paces round and round an Infant's  
grave,

And in the churchyard sod her feet have  
worn

A hollow ring; they say it is knee-deep —  
Ah! what is here?

[A female Beggar rises up, rubbing her  
eyes as if in sleep — a Child in her  
arms.

Beg. Oh! Gentlemen, I thank you;  
I've had the saddest dream that ever  
troubled

The heart of living creature. — My poor  
Babe

Was crying, as I thought, crying for bread  
When I had none to give him; whereupon,  
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand, 401  
Which pleased him so, that he was hushed  
at once:

When, into one of those same spotted bells  
A bee came darting, which the Child with  
joy

Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear,  
And suddenly grew black, as he would die.

Mar. We have no time for this, my bab-  
bling Gossip;

Here's what will comfort you.

[Gives her money.

Beg. The Saints reward you  
For this good deed! — Well, Sirs, this  
passed away;

And afterwards I fancied, a strange dog,  
Trotting alone along the beaten road, 411  
Came to my child as by my side he slept  
And, fondling, licked his face, then on a  
sudden

Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his head:  
But here he is (*kissing the Child*) it must  
have been a dream.

Osw. When next inclined to sleep, take  
my advice,

And put your head, good Woman, under  
cover.

Beg. Oh, sir, you would not talk thus, if  
you knew

What life is this of ours, how sleep will  
master

The weary-worn. — You gentlefolk have  
got

Warm chambers to your wish. I'd rather  
be

A stone than what I am. — But two nights  
gone,

The darkness overtook me — wind and rain  
Beat hard upon my head — and yet I saw

A glow-worm, through the covert of the  
furze,

Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the sky:  
At which I half accused the God in

Heaven. —  
You must forgive me.

Osw. Ay, and if you think  
The Fairies are to blame, and you should  
chide

Your favourite saint — no matter — this  
good day 430

Has made amends.

Beg. Thanks to you both; but, O sir!  
How would you like to travel on whole  
hours

As I have done, my eyes upon the ground,  
Expecting still, I knew not how, to find  
A piece of money glittering through the  
dust.

Mar. This woman is a prater. Pray,  
good Lady!

Do you tell fortunes?

Beg. Oh, Sir, you are like the rest.  
This Little-one — it cuts me to the heart —  
Well! they might turn a beggar from their  
doors,

But there are Mothers who can see the  
Babe 440

Here at my breast, and ask me where I  
bought it:

This they can do, and look upon my face —  
But you, Sir, should be kinder.

Mar. Come hither, Fathers,  
And learn what nature is from this poor  
Wretch!

Beg. Ay, Sir, there's nobody that feels  
for us.

Why now — but yesterday I overtook  
A blind old Greybeard and accosted him,  
I' th' name of all the Saints, and by the  
Mass

He should have used me better! — Charity!  
If you can melt a rock, he is your man;

But I'll be even with him — here again 451  
Have I been waiting for him.

*Osw.* Well, but softly,  
Who is it that hath wronged you?

*Beg.* Mark you me;  
I'll point him out; — a Maiden is his guide,  
Lovely as Spring's first rose; a little dog,  
Tied by a woollen cord, moves on before  
With look as sad as he were dumb; the cur,  
I owe him no ill will, but in good sooth  
He does his Master credit.

*Mar.* As I live, 459  
'Tis Herbert and no other!

*Beg.* 'Tis a feast to see him,  
Lank as a ghost and tall, his shoulders bent,  
And long beard white with age — yet ever-  
more,

As if he were the only Saint on earth,  
He turns his face to heaven.

*Osw.* But why so violent  
Against this venerable Man?

*Beg.* I'll tell you:  
He has the very hardest heart on earth;  
I had as lief turn to the Friars' school  
And knock for entrance, in mid holiday.

*Mar.* But to your story.

*Beg.* I was saying, Sir —  
Well! — he has often spurned me like a  
toad, 470

But yesterday was worse than all; — at last  
I overtook him, Sirs, my Babe and I,  
And begged a little aid for charity:  
But he was snappish as a cottage cur.

Well then, says I — I'll out with it; at  
which

I cast a look upon the Girl, and felt  
As if my heart would burst; and so I left  
him.

*Osw.* I think, good Woman, you are the  
very person

Whom, but some few days past, I saw in  
Eskdale, 479

At Herbert's door.

*Beg.* Ay; and if truth were known  
I have good business there.

*Osw.* I met you at the threshold,  
And he seemed angry.

*Beg.* Angry! well he might;  
And long as I can stir I'll dog him. — Yes-  
terday,

To serve me so, and knowing that he owes  
The best of all he has to me and mine.

But 'tis all over now. — That good old  
Lady

Has left a power of riches; and, I say it,

If there's a lawyer in the land, the knave  
Shall give me half.

*Osw.* What's this? — I fear, good Wo-  
man, 489

You have been insolent.

*Beg.* And there's the Baron,  
I spied him skulking in his peasant's dress.

*Osw.* How say you? in disguise? —

*Mar.* But what's your business  
With Herbert or his Daughter?

*Beg.* Daughter! truly —  
But how's the day? — I fear, my little  
Boy,

We've overslept ourselves. — Sirs, have  
you seen him? [*Offers to go.*]

*Mar.* I must have more of this; — you  
shall not stir

An inch, till I am answered. Know you  
aught

That doth concern this Herbert?

*Beg.* You are provoked,  
And will misuse me, Sir? 499

*Mar.* No trifling, Woman!

*Osw.* You are as safe as in a sanctuary;  
Speak.

*Mar.* Speak!

*Beg.* He is a most hard-hearted Man.

*Mar.* Your life is at my mercy.

*Beg.* Do not harm me,  
And I will tell you all! — You know not,  
Sir,

What strong temptations press upon the  
Poor.

*Osw.* Speak out.

*Beg.* Oh Sir, I've been a wicked Wo-  
man.

*Osw.* Nay, but speak out!

*Beg.* He flattered me, and said  
What harvest it would bring us both; and  
so,

I parted with the Child.

*Mar.* Parted with whom?

*Beg.* Idonea, as he calls her; but the Girl  
Is mine.

*Mar.* Yours, Woman! are you Herbert's  
wife? 510

*Beg.* Wife, Sir! his wife — not I; my  
husband, Sir,

Was of Kirkoswald — many a snowy winter  
We've weathered out together. My poor  
Gilfred!

He has been two years in his grave.

*Mar.* Enough.

*Osw.* We've solved the riddle — Mis-  
creant!

*Mar.* Do you,  
Good Dame, repair to Liddesdale and wait  
For my return; be sure you shall have  
justice.

*Osw.* A lucky woman! go, you have  
done good service. [*Aside.*]

*Mar. (to himself).* Eternal praises on  
the power that saved her! —

*Osw. (gives her money).* Here 's for your  
little boy — and when you christen  
him

520

I'll be his Godfather.

*Beg.* Oh Sir, you are merry with me.  
In grange or farm this Hundred scarcely  
owns

A dog that does not know me. — These  
good Folks,

For love of God, I must not pass their  
doors;

But I'll be back with my best speed: for  
you —

God bless and thank you both, my gentle  
Masters. [*Exit Beggar.*]

*Mar. (to himself).* The cruel Viper! —  
Poor devoted Maid,

Now I do love thee.

*Osw.* I am thunderstruck.

*Mar.* Where is she — holla!

[*Calling to the Beggar, who returns; he  
looks at her steadfastly.*]

You are Idonea's mother? —

Nay, be not terrified — it does me good 530  
To look upon you.

*Osw. (interrupting).* In a peasant's dress  
You saw, who was it?

*Beg.* Nay, I dare not speak;  
He is a man, if it should come to his ears  
I never shall be heard of more.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford?

*Beg.* What can I do? believe me, gentle  
Sirs,

I love her, though I dare not call her  
daughter.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford — did you see him  
talk with Herbert?

*Beg.* Yes, to my sorrow — under the  
great oak

At Herbert's door — and when he stood  
beside

The blind Man — at the silent Girl he  
looked 540

With such a look — it makes me tremble,  
Sir,

To think of it.

*Osw.* Enough! you may depart.

*Mar. (to himself).* Father! — to God  
himself we cannot give

A holier name; and, under such a mask,  
To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed,  
To that abhorred den of brutish vice! —  
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life  
Is going from under me; these strange  
discoveries —

Looked at from every point of fear or hope,  
Duty, or love — involve, I feel, my ruin.

## ACT II

### SCENE — A Chamber in the Hostel

*OSWALD alone, rising from a Table on which  
he had been writing.*

*Osw.* They chose him for their Chief! —  
what covert part

He, in the preference, modest Youth, might  
take,

I neither know nor care. The insult bred  
More of contempt than hatred; both are  
flown;

That either e'er existed is my shame:

'T was a dull spark — a most unnatural fire  
That died the moment the air breathed  
upon it.

— These fools of feeling are mere birds of  
winter

That haunt some barren island of the north,  
Where, if a famishing man stretch forth his  
hand, 10

They think it is to feed them. I have left  
him

To solitary meditation; — now

For a few swelling phrases, and a flash

Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind,

And he is mine for ever — here he comes.

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar.* These ten years she has moved her  
lips all day

And never speaks!

*Osw.* Who is it?

*Mar.* I have seen her.

*Osw.* Oh! the poor tenant of that ragged  
homestead,

Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove to  
madness.

*Mar.* I met a peasant near the spot; he  
told me, 20

These ten years she had sate all day alone  
Within those empty walls.

*Osw.* I too have seen her;  
 Chancing to pass this way some six months  
 gone,  
 At midnight, I betook me to the Church-  
 yard:  
 The moon shone clear, the air was still, so  
 still  
 The trees were silent as the graves beneath  
 them.  
 Long did I watch, and saw her pacing  
 round  
 Upon the self-same spot, still round and  
 round,  
 Her lips for ever moving.

*Mar.* At her door  
 Rooted I stood; for, looking at the woman,  
 I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea. 31  
*Osw.* But the pretended Father —

*Mar.* Earthly law  
 Measures not crimes like his.

*Osw.* We rank not, happily,  
 With those who take the spirit of their rule  
 From that soft class of devotees who feel  
 Reverence for life so deeply, that they  
 spare  
 The verminous brood, and cherish what  
 they spare  
 While feeding on their bodies. Would that  
 Idonea

Were present, to the end that we might hear  
 What she can urge in his defence; she loves  
 him. 40

*Mar.* Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth that  
 multiplies  
 His guilt a thousand-fold.

*Osw.* 'Tis most perplexing:  
 What must be done?

*Mar.* We will conduct her hither;  
 These walls shall witness it — from first to  
 last

He shall reveal himself.

*Osw.* Happy are we,  
 Who live in these disputed tracts, that own  
 No law but what each man makes for him-  
 self;

Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

*Mar.* Let us be gone and bring her  
 hither; — here  
 The truth shall be laid open, his guilt  
 proved 50

Before her face. The rest be left to me.

*Osw.* You will be firm: but though we  
 well may trust

The issue to the justice of the cause,  
 Caution must not be flung aside; remember,

Yours is no common life. Self-stationed  
 here

Upon these savage confines, we have seen  
 you

Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy  
 seas

That oft have checked their fury at your  
 bidding.

Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy  
 waste,

Your single virtue has transformed a  
 Band 60

Of fierce barbarians into Ministers

Of peace and order. Aged men with tears  
 Have blessed their steps, the fatherless re-  
 tire

For shelter to their banners. But it is,  
 As you must needs have deeply felt, it is  
 In darkness and in tempest that we seek  
 The majesty of Him who rules the world.  
 Benevolence, that has not heart to use  
 The wholesome ministry of pain and evil,  
 Becomes at last weak and contemptible. 70

Your generous qualities have won due  
 praise,

But vigorous Spirits look for something  
 more

Than Youth's spontaneous products; and  
 to-day

You will not disappoint them; and here-  
 after —

*Mar.* You are wasting words; hear me  
 then, once for all:

You are a Man — and therefore, if com-  
 passion,

Which to your kind is natural as life,

Be known unto you, you will love this  
 Woman,

Even as I do; but I should loathe the light,  
 If I could think one weak or partial feel-  
 ing — 80

*Osw.* You will forgive me —

*Mar.* If I ever knew  
 My heart, could penetrate its inmost core,  
 'Tis at this moment. — Oswald, I have  
 loved

To be the friend and father of the oppressed,  
 A comforter of sorrow; — there is some-  
 thing

Which looks like a transition in my soul,  
 And yet it is not. — Let us lead him hither.

*Osw.* Stoop for a moment; 'tis an act of  
 justice;

And where 's the triumph if the delegate  
 Must fall in the execution of his office? 90



The deed is done — if you will have it so —  
Here where we stand — that tribe of vulgar wretches

(You saw them gathering for the festival)  
Rush in — the villains seize us —

Mar. Seize !

Osw. Yes, they —  
Men who are little given to sift and weigh —  
Would wreak on us the passion of the moment.

Mar. The cloud will soon disperse —  
farewell — but stay,

Thou wilt relate the story.

Osw. Am I neither  
To bear a part in this Man's punishment,  
Nor be its witness ?

Mar. I had many hopes <sup>100</sup>  
That were most dear to me, and some will  
bear

To be transferred to thee.

Osw. When I'm dishonoured !

Mar. I would preserve thee. How may  
this be done ?

Osw. By showing that you look beyond  
the instant.

A few leagues hence we shall have open  
ground,

And nowhere upon earth is place so fit  
To look upon the deed. Before we enter  
The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling  
rock

The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft  
Has held infernal orgies — with the gloom,  
And very superstition of the place, <sup>111</sup>  
Seasoning his wickedness. The Debauchee  
Would there perhaps have gathered the  
first fruits

Of this mock Father's guilt.

*Enter Host conducting HERBERT.*

Host. The Baron Herbert  
Attends your pleasure.

Osw. (to Host). We are ready —  
(To Herbert) Sir !

I hope you are refreshed. — I have just  
written

A notice for your Daughter, that she may  
know

What is become of you. — You'll sit down  
and sign it ;

'T will glad her heart to see her father's  
signature.

[Gives the letter he had written.

Her. Thanks for your care.

[Sits down and writes. Exit Host.

Osw. (*aside to Marmaduke*). Perhaps it  
would be useful <sup>120</sup>

That you too should subscribe your name.

[Marmaduke overlooks Herbert — then  
writes — examines the letter eagerly.

Mar. I cannot leave this paper.

[He puts it up, agitated.

Osw. (*aside*). Dastard ! Come.

[Marmaduke goes towards Herbert and  
supports him — Marmaduke trem-  
blingly beckons Oswald to take his  
place.

Mar. (*as he quits Herbert*). There is a  
palsy in his limbs — he shakes.

[Ezeunt Oswald and Herbert — Mar-  
maduke following.

SCENE changes to a Wood

A group of Pilgrims, IDONEA with them.

First Pil. A grove of darker and more  
lofty shade

I never saw.

Second Pil. The music of the birds  
Drops deadened from a roof so thick with  
leaves.

Old Pil. This news ! It made my heart  
leap up with joy.

Idon. I scarcely can believe it.

Old Pil. Myself, I heard  
The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter <sup>129</sup>  
Which purported it was the royal pleasure  
The Baron Herbert, who, as was supposed,  
Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood,  
Should be forthwith restored. The hear-  
ing, Lady,

Filled my dim eyes with tears. — When I  
returned

From Palestine, and brought with me a  
heart,

Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly,  
comfort,

I met your Father, then a wandering Out-  
cast :

He had a Guide, a Shepherd's boy ; but  
grieved

He was that One so young should pass his  
youth

In such sad service ; and he parted with him.  
We joined our tales of wretchedness to-  
gether,

And begged our daily bread from door to  
door. <sup>141</sup>

I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady !

For once you loved me.

*Idon.* You shall back with me  
And see your Friend again. The good old  
Man

Will be rejoiced to greet you.

*Old Pil.* It seems but yesterday  
That a fierce storm o'ertook us, worn with  
travel,

In a deep wood remote from any town.  
A cave that opened to the road presented  
A friendly shelter, and we entered in. 150

*Idon.* And I was with you?

*Old Pil.* If indeed 't was you —  
But you were then a tottering Little-one —  
We sate us down. The sky grew dark and  
darker :

I struck my flint, and built up a small fire  
With rotten boughs and leaves, such as the  
winds

Of many autumns in the cave had piled.  
Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the  
woods ;

Our little fire sent forth a cheering warmth  
And we were comforted, and talked of  
comfort ;

But 't was an angry night, and o'er our  
heads 160

The thunder rolled in peals that would  
have made

A sleeping man uneasy in his bed.  
O Lady, you have need to love your Father.  
His voice — methinks I hear it now, his  
voice

When, after a broad flash that filled the cave,  
He said to me, that he had seen his Child,  
A face (no cherub's face more beautiful)  
Revealed by lustre brought with it from  
Heaven ;

And it was you, dear Lady !

*Idon.* God be praised,  
That I have been his comforter till now ! 170  
And will be so through every change of  
fortune

And every sacrifice his peace requires. —  
Let us be gone with speed, that he may hear  
These joyful tidings from no lips but mine.  
[*Exeunt Idonea and Pilgrims.*]

SCENE — *The Area of a half-ruined Castle  
— on one side the entrance to a dungeon*

OSWALD and MARMADUKE *pacing back-  
wards and forwards.*

*Mar.* 'T is a wild night.

*Osw.* I'd give my cloak and bonnet  
For sight of a warm fire.

*Mar.* The wind blows keen;  
My hands are numb.

*Osw.* Ha! ha! 't is nipping cold.  
[*Blowing his fingers.*]

I long for news of our brave Comrades;  
*Lacy*

Would drive those Scottish Rovers to their  
dens

If once they blew a horn this side the  
Tweed. 180

*Mar.* I think I see a second range of  
Towers;

This castle has another Area — come,  
Let us examine it.

*Osw.* 'T is a bitter night;  
I hope Idonea is well housed. That horse-  
man,

Who at full speed swept by us where the  
wood

Roared in the tempest, was within an ace  
Of sending to his grave our precious Charge:  
That would have been a vile mischance.

*Mar.* It would.

*Osw.* Justice had been most cruelly de-  
frauded.

*Mar.* Most cruelly.

*Osw.* As up the steep we clomb,  
I saw a distant fire in the north-east; 190  
I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon:  
With proper speed our quarters may be  
gained

To-morrow evening.

[*Looks restlessly towards the mouth of the  
dungeon.*]

*Mar.* When, upon the plank,  
I had led him 'cross the torrent, his voice  
blessed me:

You could not hear, for the foam beat the  
rocks

With deafening noise, — the benediction fell  
Back on himself; but changed into a  
curse.

*Osw.* As well indeed it might.

*Mar.* And this you deem  
The fittest place?

*Osw. (aside).* He is growing pitiful. 200

*Mar. (listening).* What an odd moaning  
that is! —

*Osw.* Mighty odd

The wind should pipe a little, while we  
stand

Cooling our heels in this way! — I'll begin  
And count the stars.

*Mar. (still listening).* That dog of his,  
you are sure,

Could not come after us — he *must* have perished;

The torrent would have dashed an oak to splinters.

You said you did not like his looks — that he would trouble us; if he were here again, I swear the sight of him would quail me more

Than twenty armies.

*Osw.* How?

*Mar.* The old blind Man, When you had told him the mischance, was troubled

Even to the shedding of some natural tears Into the torrent over which he hung, Listening in vain.

*Osw.* He has a tender heart!

[*Oswald offers to go down into the dungeon.*]

*Mar.* How now, what mean you?

*Osw.* Truly, I was going To waken our stray Baron. Were there not A farm or dwelling-house within five leagues, We should deserve to wear a cap and bells, Three good round years, for playing the fool here

In such a night as this.

*Mar.* Stop, stop.

*Osw.* Perhaps, You'd better like we should descend together, And lie down by his side — what say you to it?

Three of us — we should keep each other warm:

I'll answer for it that our four-legged friend Shall not disturb us; further I'll not engage; Come, come, for manhood's sake!

*Mar.* These drowsy shiverings, This mortal stupor which is creeping over me,

What do they mean? were this my single body

Opposed to armies, not a nerve would tremble:

Why do I tremble now? — Is not the depth Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach of thought?

And yet, in plumbing the abyss for judgment,

Something I strike upon which turns my mind

Back on herself, I think, again — my breast Concentrates all the terrors of the Universe: I look at him and tremble like a child.

*Osw.* Is it possible?

*Mar.* One thing you noticed not: Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing force.

This is a time, said he, when guilt may shudder;

But there's a Providence for them who walk In helplessness, when innocence is with them.

At this audacious blasphemy, I thought The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride the air.

*Osw.* Why are you not the man you were that moment?

[*He draws Marmaduke to the dungeon.*]

*Mar.* You say he was asleep, — look at this arm,

And tell me if 't is fit for such a work.

Oswald, Oswald! [*Leans upon Oswald.*]

*Osw.* This is some sudden seizure!

*Mar.* A most strange faintness, — will you hunt me out

A draught of water?

*Osw.* Nay, to see you thus Moves me beyond my bearing. — I will try To gain the torrent's brink. [*Exit Oswald.*]

*Mar.* [*after a pause*]. It seems an age Since that Man left me. — No, I am not lost.

*Her.* [*at the mouth of the dungeon*]. Give me your hand; where are you, Friends? and tell me

How goes the night.

*Mar.* 'T is hard to measure time, In such a weary night, and such a place.

*Her.* I do not hear the voice of my friend Oswald.

*Mar.* A minute past, he went to fetch a draught

Of water from the torrent. 'T is, you'll say, A cheerless beverage.

*Her.* How good it was in you To stay behind! — Hearing at first no answer,

I was alarmed.

*Mar.* No wonder; this is a place That well may put some fears into your heart.

*Her.* Why so? a roofless rock had been a comfort,

Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were; And in a night like this, to lend your cloaks To make a bed for me! — My Girl will

weep When she is told of it.

*Mar.* This Daughter of yours  
Is very dear to you.

*Her.* Oh! but you are young;  
Over your head twice twenty years must  
roll, <sup>270</sup>  
With all their natural weight of sorrow and  
pain,  
Ere can be known to you how much a Fa-  
ther  
May love his Child.

*Mar.* Thank you, old Man, for this!  
[*Aside.*

*Her.* Fallen am I, and worn out, a useless  
Man;

Kindly have you protected me to-night,  
And no return have I to make but prayers;  
May you in age be blest with such a daugh-  
ter! —

When from the Holy Land I had returned  
Sightless, and from my heritage was driven,  
A wretched Outcast — but this strain of  
thought <sup>280</sup>

Would lead me to talk fondly.

*Mar.* Do not fear;  
Your words are precious to my ears; go on.

*Her.* You will forgive me, but my heart  
runs over.

When my old Leader slipped into the flood  
And perished, what a piercing outcry you  
Sent after him. I have loved you ever since.  
You start — where are we?

*Mar.* Oh, there is no danger;  
The cold blast struck me.

*Her.* 'T was a foolish question.

*Mar.* But when you were an Outcast? —  
Heaven is just;

Your piety would not miss its due reward;  
The little Orphan then would be your suc-  
cour, <sup>291</sup>

And do good service, though she knew it  
not.

*Her.* I turned me from the dwellings of  
my Fathers,

Where none but those who trampled on my  
rights

Seemed to remember me. To the wide  
world

I bore her, in my arms; her looks won  
pity;

She was my Raven in the wilderness,  
And brought me food. Have I not cause to  
love her? <sup>298</sup>

*Mar.* Yes.

*Her.* More than ever Parent loved a  
Child?

*Mar.* Yes, yes.

*Her.* I will not murmur, merciful God!  
I will not murmur; blasted as I have  
been,

Thou hast left me ears to hear my Daugh-  
ter's voice,

And arms to fold her to my heart. Sub-  
missively

Thee I adore, and find my rest in faith.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Herbert! — confusion! (*Aside.*)

Here it is, my Friend,

[*Presents the Horn.*

A charming beverage for you to carouse,  
This bitter night.

*Her.* Ha! Oswald! ten bright crosses  
I would have given, not many minutes gone,  
To have heard your voice.

*Osw.* Your couch, I fear, good Baron,  
Has been but comfortless; and yet that  
place, <sup>310</sup>

When the tempestuous wind first drove us  
hither,

Felt warm as a wren's nest. You'd better  
turn

And under covert rest till break of day,  
Or till the storm abate.

(*To Marmaduke aside.*) He has restored  
you.

No doubt you have been nobly entertained?  
But soft! — how came he forth? The

Night-mare Conscience  
Has driven him out of harbour?

*Mar.* I believe  
You have guessed right.

*Her.* The trees renew their murmur:  
Come, let us house together.

[*Oswald conducts him to the dungeon.*

*Osw.* (*returns.*) Had I not  
Esteemed you worthy to conduct the affair  
To its most fit conclusion, do you think <sup>321</sup>  
I would so long have struggled with my  
Nature,

And smothered all that's man in me? —  
away! —

[*Looking towards the dungeon.*

This man's the property of him who best  
Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a  
privilege;

It now becomes my duty to resume it.

*Mar.* Touch not a finger —

*Osw.* What then must be done?

*Mar.* Which way so'er I turn, I am per-  
plexed.

*Osw.* Now, on my life, I grieve for you.

The misery  
Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts  
Did not admit of stronger evidence; 331  
Twelve honest men, plain men, would set  
us right; 332  
Their verdict would abolish these weak  
scruples.

*Mar.* Weak! I am weak — there does  
my torment lie,  
Feeding itself.

*Osw.* Verily, when he said  
How his old heart would leap to hear her  
steps,

You thought his voice the echo of Idonea's.  
*Mar.* And never heard a sound so terri-  
ble.

*Osw.* Perchance you think so now?

*Mar.* I cannot do it:  
Twice did I spring to grasp his withered  
throat, 340  
When such a sudden weakness fell upon  
me,

I could have dropped asleep upon his breast.

*Osw.* Justice — is there not thunder in  
the word?

Shall it be law to stab the petty robber  
Who aims but at our purse; and shall this  
Parricide —

Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dishonour  
Be worse than death) to that confiding  
Creature

Whom he to more than filial love and duty  
Hath falsely trained — shall he fulfil his  
purpose? 349

But you are fallen.

*Mar.* Fallen should I be indeed —  
Murder — perhaps asleep, blind, old, alone,  
Betrayed, in darkness! Here to strike the  
blow —

Away! away! —

[*Flings away his sword.*]

*Osw.* Nay, I have done with you:  
We'll lead him to the Convent. He shall  
live,

And she shall love him. With unquestioned  
title

He shall be seated in his Barony,  
And we too chant the praise of his good  
deeds.

I now perceive we do mistake our masters,  
And most despise the men who best can  
teach us:

Henceforth it shall be said that bad men  
only 360

Are brave: Clifford is brave; and that old  
Man

Is brave.

[*Taking Marmaduke's sword and giving  
it to him.*]

To Clifford's arms he would have led  
His Victim — haply to this desolate house.

*Mar.* (*advancing to the dungeon*). It  
must be ended! —

*Osw.* Softly; do not rouse him;  
He will deny it to the last. He lies  
Within the Vault, a spear's length to the  
left.

[*Marmaduke descends to the dungeon.*  
(*Alone.*) The Villains rose in mutiny to de-  
stroy me;

I could have quelled the Cowards, but this  
Stripling  
Must needs step in, and save my life. The  
look

With which he gave the boon — I see it  
now! 370

The same that tempted me to loathe the  
gift. —

For this old venerable Greybeard — faith  
'Tis his own fault if he hath got a face  
Which doth play tricks with them that look  
on it:

'Twas this that put it in my thoughts — that  
countenance —

His staff — his figure — Murder! — what,  
of whom?

We kill a worn-out horse, and who but  
women

Sigh at the deed? Hew down a withered  
tree,

And none look grave but dotards. He may  
live

To thank me for this service. Rainbow  
arches, 380

Highways of dreaming passion, have too  
long,

Young as he is, diverted wish and hope  
From the unpretending ground we mortals  
tread; —

Then shatter the delusion, break it up  
And set him free. What follows? I have  
learned

That things will work to ends the slaves o'  
the world

Do never dream of. I have been what he —  
This Boy — when he comes forth with  
bloody hands —

Might envy, and am now, — but he shall  
know 389

What I am now —

[*Goes and listens at the dungeon.*

Praying or parleying? — tut!

Is he not eyeless? He has been half-dead  
These fifteen years —

*Enter female Beggar with two or three of her  
Companions.*

(*Turning abruptly.*) *Ha! speak* — what  
Thing art thou?

(*Recognizes her.*) Heavens! my good  
Friend! [*To her.*

*Beg.* Forgive me, gracious Sir! —

*Osw.* (*to her companions*). Begone, ye  
Slaves, or I will raise a whirlwind

And send ye dancing to the clouds, like  
leaves. [*They retire affrighted.*

*Beg.* Indeed we meant no harm; we  
lodge sometimes

In this deserted Castle — *I repent me.*

[*Oswald goes to the dungeon — listens —  
returns to the Beggar.*

*Osw.* Woman, thou hast a helpless Infant  
— keep

Thy secret for its sake, or verily  
That wretched life of thine shall be the  
forfeit. 400

*Beg.* I do repent me, Sir; I fear the curse  
Of that blind Man. 'T was not your money,  
sir —

*Osw.* Begone!

*Beg.* (*going*). There is some wicked deed  
in hand: [*Aside.*

Would I could find the old Man and his  
Daughter. [*Exit Beggar.*

MARMADUKE (*re-enters from the dungeon*).

*Osw.* It is all over then; — your foolish  
fears

Are hushed to sleep, by your own act and  
deed,

Made quiet as he is.

*Mar.* Why came you down?  
And when I felt your hand upon my arm  
And spake to you, why did you give no  
answer?

Feared you to waken him? he must have  
been 410

In a deep sleep. I whispered to him thrice.  
There are the strangest echoes in that  
place!

*Osw.* Tut! let them gabble till the day  
of doom.

*Mar.* Scarcely, by groping, had I reached  
the Spot,

When round my wrist I felt a cord drawn  
tight,

As if the blind Man's dog were pulling at  
it.

*Osw.* But after that?

*Mar.* The features of Idonea  
Lurked in his face —

*Osw.* Psha! Never to these eyes  
Will retribution show itself again 419

With aspect so inviting. Why forbid me

To share your triumph?

*Mar.* Yes, her very look,

Smiling in sleep —

*Osw.* A pretty feat of Fancy!

*Mar.* Though but a glimpse, it sent me  
to my prayers.

*Osw.* Is he alive?

*Mar.* What mean you? who alive?

*Osw.* Herbert! since you will have it,  
Baron Herbert;

He who will gain his Signory when Idonea  
Hath become Clifford's harlot — is he liv-  
ing?

*Mar.* The old Man in that dungeon is  
alive.

*Osw.* Henceforth, then, will I never in  
camp or field

Obeys you more. Your weakness, to the  
Band 430

Shall be proclaimed: brave Men, they all  
shall hear it.

You a protector of humanity!

Avenger you of outraged innocence!

*Mar.* 'T was dark — dark as the grave;  
yet did I see,

Saw him — his face turned toward me; and  
I tell thee

Idonea's filial countenance was there

To baffle me — it put me to my prayers.

Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a  
crevice,

Beheld a star twinkling above my head,

And, by the living God, I could not do  
it. [*Sinks exhausted.*

*Osw.* (*to himself*). Now may I perish if  
this turn do more 441

Than make me change my course.

(*To Marmaduke.*) Dear Marmaduke,  
My words were rashly spoken; I recall  
them:

I feel my error; shedding human blood

Is a most serious thing.

*Mar.* Not I alone,

Thou too art deep in guilt.

*Osw.* We have indeed

Been most presumptuous. There is guilt in this,

Else could so strong a mind have ever known

These trepidations? Plain it is that Heaven  
Has marked out this foul Wretch as one  
whose crimes 450

Must never come before a mortal judgment-seat,

Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

*Mar.* A thought that's worth a thousand  
worlds! [*Goes towards the dungeon.*

*Osw.* I grieve  
That, in my zeal, I have caused you so much  
pain.

*Mar.* Think not of that! 't is over — we  
are safe.

*Osw.* (*as if to himself, yet speaking aloud*).  
The truth is hideous, but how stifle  
it? [*Turning to Marmaduke.*

Give me your sword — nay, here are stones  
and fragments,

The least of which would beat out a man's  
brains;

Or you might drive your head against that  
wall. 459

No! this is not the place to hear the tale:  
It should be told you pinioned in your bed,  
Or on some vast and solitary plain,  
Blown to you from a trumpet.

*Mar.* Why talk thus?  
Whate'er the monster brooding in your  
breast

I care not: fear I have none, and cannot  
fear —

[*The sound of a horn is heard.*  
That horn again — 'T is some one of our  
Troop;

What do they here? Listen!

*Osw.* What! dogged like thieves!

*Enter WALLACE and LACY, etc.*

*Lacy.* You are found at last, thanks to  
the vagrant Troop  
For not misleading us.

*Osw.* (*looking at Wallace*). That subtle  
Greybeard —

I'd rather see my father's ghost. 470

*Lacy* (*to Marmaduke*). My Captain,  
We come by order of the Band. Belike  
You have not heard that Henry has at  
last

Dissolved the Barons' League, and sent  
abroad

His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate

The genuine owners of such Lands and  
Baronies

As, in these long commotions, have been  
seized.

His Power is this way tending. It befits us  
To stand upon our guard, and with our  
swords

Defend the innocent.

*Mar.* Lacy! we look  
But at the surfaces of things; we hear 480  
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young  
and old

Driven out in troops to want and nakedness;  
Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure  
That flatters us, because it asks not thought:  
The deeper malady is better hid;

The world is poisoned at the heart.

*Lacy.* What mean you?

*Wal.* (*whose eye has been fixed suspiciously  
upon Oswald*). Ay, what is it you  
mean?

*Mar.* Hark'e, my Friends; —  
[*Appearing gay.*

Were there a Man who, being weak and  
helpless

And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother,  
pressed

By penury, to yield him up her Daughter,  
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe, 491  
Prattling upon his knee, to call him  
Father —

*Lacy.* Why, if his heart be tender, that  
offence

I could forgive him.

*Mar.* (*going on*). And should he make  
the Child

An instrument of falsehood, should he teach  
her

To stretch her arms, and dim the gladsome  
light

Of infant playfulness with piteous looks  
Of misery that was not —

*Lacy.* Troth, 't is hard —  
But in a world like ours —

*Mar.* (*changing his tone*). This selfsame  
Man —

Even while he printed kisses on the cheek  
Of this poor Babe, and taught its innocent  
tongue 501

To lisp the name of Father — could he look  
To the unnatural harvest of that time

When he should give her up, a Woman  
grown,

To him who bid the highest in the market  
Of foul pollution —

*Lacy.* The whole visible world  
Contains not such a Monster!

*Mar.* For this purpose  
Should he resolve to taint her Soul by  
means

Which bathe the limbs in sweat to think of  
them;

Should he, by tales which would draw tears  
from iron, 510

Work on her nature, and so turn compas-  
sion

And gratitude to ministers of vice,  
And make the spotless spirit of filial love  
Prime mover in a plot to damn his Victim  
Both soul and body —

*Wal.* 'Tis too horrible;  
Oswald, what say you to it?

*Lacy.* Hew him down,  
And fling him to the ravens.

*Mar.* But his aspect  
It is so meek, his countenance so venerable.

*Wal.* (with an appearance of mistrust).

But how, what say you, Oswald?

*Lacy* (at the same moment). Stab him,  
were it

Before the Altar.

*Mar.* What, if he were sick,  
Tottering upon the very verge of life, 521  
And old, and blind —

*Lacy.* Blind, say you?

*Osw.* (coming forward). Are we Men,  
Or own we baby Spirits? Genuine cour-  
age

Is not an accidental quality,  
A thing dependent for its casual birth  
On opposition and impediment.

Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats  
down

The giant's strength; and, at the voice of  
Justice,

Spare not the worm. The giant and the  
worm —

She weighs them in one scale. The wiles  
of woman, 530

And craft of age, seducing reason, first  
Made weakness a protection, and obscured  
The moral shapes of things. His tender  
cries

And helpless innocence — do they protect  
The infant lamb? and shall the infirmities,  
Which have enabled this enormous Culprit  
To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a Sanc-  
tuary

To cover him from punishment? Shame!  
— Justice,

Admitting no resistance, bends alike

The feeble and the strong. She needs not  
here 540

Her bonds and chains, which make the  
mighty feeble. \*

— We recognize in this old Man a victim  
Prepared already for the sacrifice.

*Lacy.* By heaven, his words are reason!

*Osw.* Yes, my Friends,

His countenance is meek and venerable;  
And, by the Mass, to see him at his  
prayers! —

I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish  
When my heart does not ache to think of  
it! —

Poor Victim! not a virtue under heaven

But what was made an engine to ensnare  
thee; 550

But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.

*Lacy.* Idonea!

*Wal.* How! what? your Idonea?  
(To Marmaduke.)

*Mar.* Mine!

But now no longer mine. You know Lord  
Clifford;

He is the Man to whom the Maiden —  
pure

As beautiful, and gentle and benign,  
And in her ample heart loving even me —  
Was to be yielded up.

*Lacy.* Now, by the head  
Of my own child, this Man must die; my  
hand,

A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine  
In his grey hairs! —

*Mar.* (to Lacy). I love the Father in  
thee. 560

You know me, Friends; I have a heart to  
feel,

And I have felt, more than perhaps becomes  
me

Or duty sanctions.

*Lacy.* We will have ample justice.  
Who are we, Friends? Do we not live on  
ground

Where Souls are self-defended, free to  
grow

Like mountain oaks rocked by the stormy  
wind.

Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which decreed  
This monstrous crime to be laid open —  
here,

Where Reason has an eye that she can use,  
And Men alone are Umpires. To the  
Camp 570



He shall be led, and there, the Country  
round

All gathered to the spot, in open day  
Shall Nature be avenged.

Osw. 'Tis nobly thought;  
His death will be a monument for ages.

Mar. (to Lacy). I thank you for that  
hint. He shall be brought  
Before the Camp, and would that best and  
wisest

Of every country might be present. There,  
His crime shall be proclaimed; and for the  
rest

It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide:  
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and  
see 580

That all is well prepared.

Wal. We will obey you.  
(Aside.) But softly! we must look a little  
nearer.

Mar. Tell where you found us. At some  
future time

I will explain the cause. [Exeunt.

### ACT III

SCENE—*The Door of the Hostel*

A group of Pilgrims as before; IDONEA and  
the Host among them.

Host. Lady, you'll find your Father at the  
Convent

As I have told you: He left us yesterday  
With two Companions; one of them, as  
seemed,

His most familiar Friend. (Going.) There  
was a letter

Of which I heard them speak, but that I  
fancy

Has been forgotten.

Idon. (to Host). Farewell!

Host. Gentle pilgrims,  
St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy errand.  
[Exeunt Idonea and Pilgrims.

SCENE—*A desolate Moor*

OSWALD (alone).

Osw. Carry him to the Camp! Yes, to  
the Camp.

Oh, Wisdom! a most wise resolve! and  
then,

That half a word should blow it to the  
winds! 10

This last device must end my work. — Me-  
thinks

It were a pleasant pastime to construct  
A scale and table of belief — as thus —  
Two columns, one for passion, one for  
proof;

Each rises as the other falls: and first,  
Passion a unit and *against* us — proof —  
Nay, we must travel in another path,  
Or we're stuck fast for ever; — passion,  
then,

Shall be a unit *for* us; proof — no, passion!  
We'll not insult thy majesty by time, 20  
Person, and place — the where, the when,  
the how,

And all particulars that dull brains require  
To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact,  
They bow to, calling the idol, Demonstra-  
tion.

A whipping to the Moralists who preach  
That misery is a sacred thing: for me,  
I know no cheaper engine to degrade a  
man,

Nor any half so sure. This Stripling's  
mind

Is shaken till the dregs float on the surface;  
And, in the storm and anguish of the heart.  
He talks of a transition in his Soul, 30  
And dreams that he is happy. We dissect  
The senseless body, and why not the  
mind? —

These are strange sights — the mind of man,  
upturned,

Is in all natures a strange spectacle;  
In some a hideous one — hem! shall I  
stop?

No. — Thoughts and feelings will sink deep,  
but then

They have no substance. Pass but a few  
minutes,

And something shall be done which Memory  
May touch, whene'er her Vassals are at  
work. 40

Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.

Osw. (turning to meet him). But listen,  
for my peace —

Mar. Why, I believe you.

Osw. But hear the proofs —

Mar. Ay, prove that when two peas  
Lie snugly in a pod, the pod must then  
Be larger than the peas — prove this —  
't were matter

Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to dream  
It ever could be otherwise!

*Osw.* Last night  
When I returned with water from the brook,  
I overheard the Villains — every word  
Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart.  
Said one, "It is agreed on. The blind  
Man  
50 Shall feign a sudden illness, and the Girl,  
Who on her journey must proceed alone,  
Under pretence of violence, be seized.  
She is," continued the detested Slave,  
"She is right willing — strange if she were  
not! —

They say, Lord Clifford is a savage man;  
But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic,  
Fitting his low voice to the minstrel's harp,  
There's witchery in 't. I never knew a  
maid  
That could withstand it. True," continued  
he, 60  
'When we arranged the affair, she wept a  
little

(Not the less welcome to my Lord for that)  
And said, 'My Father he will have it so.'"  
*Mar.* I am your hearer.

*Osw.* This I caught, and more  
That may not be retold to any ear.  
The obstinate bolt of a small iron door  
Detained them near the gateway of the  
Castle.

By a dim lantern's light I saw that wreaths  
Of flowers were in their hands, as if de-  
signed  
For festive decoration; and they said, 70  
With brutal laughter and most foul allu-  
sion,  
That they should share the banquet with  
their Lord  
And his new Favourite.

*Mar.* Misery! —

*Osw.* I knew  
How you would be disturbed by this dire  
news,  
And therefore chose this solitary Moor,  
Here to impart the tale, of which, last  
night,  
I strove to ease my mind, when our two  
Comrades,  
Commissioned by the Band, burst in upon  
us.

*Mar.* Last night, when moved to lift the  
avenging steel,  
I did believe all things were shadows —  
yea, 80  
Living or dead all things were bodiless,  
Or but the mutual mockeries of body,

Till that same star summoned me back  
again.

Now I could laugh till my ribs ached. Oh  
Fool!

To let a creed, built in the heart of things,  
Dissolve before a twinkling atom! — Os-  
wald,

I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools  
Than you have entered, were it worth the  
pains.

Young as I am, I might go forth a teacher,  
And you should see how deeply I could  
reason 90

Of love in all its shapes, beginnings, ends;  
Of moral qualities in their diverse aspects;  
Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

*Osw.* You take it as it merits —

*Mar.* One a King,  
General or Cham, Sultan or Emperor,  
Strews twenty acres of good meadow-  
ground

With carcasses, in lineament and shape  
And substance nothing differing from his  
own,

But that they cannot stand up of them-  
selves;

Another sits i' th' sun, and by the hour 100  
Floats kingcups in the brook — a Hero one  
We call, and scorn the other as Time's  
spendthrift;

But have they not a world of common  
ground

To occupy — both fools, or wise alike,  
Each in his way?

*Osw.* Troth, I begin to think so.

*Mar.* Now for the corner-stone of my  
philosophy:

I would not give a denier for the man  
Who, on such provocation as this earth  
Yields, could not chuck his babe beneath  
the chin,

And send it with a fillip to its grave. 110

*Osw.* Nay, you leave me behind.

*Mar.* That such a One,  
So pious in demeanour! in his look  
So saintly and so pure! — Hark'e, my  
Friend,

I'll plant myself before Lord Clifford's  
Castle,

A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,  
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a med-  
ley

Most tunable.

*Osw.* In faith, a pleasant scheme;  
But take your sword along with you, for that

Might in such neighbourhood find seemly use. —

But first, how wash our hands of this old Man ?

*Mar.* Oh yes, that mole, that viper in the path;

Plague on my memory, him I had forgotten.

*Osw.* You know we left him sitting — see him yonder.

*Mar.* Ha ! ha ! —

*Osw.* As 't will be but a moment's work, I will stroll on; you follow when 't is done.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to another part of the Moor at a short distance*

*HERBERT is discovered seated on a stone.*

*Her.* A sound of laughter, too ! — 't is well — I feared,

The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow Pressing upon his solitary heart.

Hush ! — 't is the feeble and earth-loving wind

That creeps along the bells of the crisp heather.

Alas ! 't is cold — I shiver in the sunshine — What can this mean ? There is a psalm that speaks

Of God's parental mercies — with Idonea I used to sing it. — Listen ! — what foot is there ?

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar. (aside — looking at Herbert).* And I have loved this Man ! and she hath loved him !

And I loved her, and she loves the Lord Clifford !

And there it ends ; — if this be not enough To make mankind merry for evermore, Then plain it is as day, that eyes were made For a wise purpose — verily to weep with !  
[*Looking round.*]

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece Of Nature, finished with most curious skill !  
(*To Herbert.*) Good Baron, have you ever practised tillage ?  
Pray tell me what this land is worth by the acre ?

*Her.* How glad I am to hear your voice ! I know not

Wherein I have offended you ; — last night I found in you the kindest of Protectors ; This morning, when I spoke of weariness,

You from my shoulder took my scrip and threw it

About your own ; but for these two hours past

Once only have you spoken, when the lark Whirred from among the fern beneath our feet,

And I, no coward in my better days, Was almost terrified.

*Mar.* That's excellent ! — So, you bethought you of the many ways In which a man may come to his end, whose crimes

Have roused all Nature up against him — pshaw ! —

*Her.* For mercy's sake, is nobody in sight ?

No traveller, peasant, herdsman ?

*Mar.* Not a soul : Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, and bare,

That turns its goat's-beard flakes of peagreen moss

From the stern breathing of the rough seawind ;

This have we, but no other company :

Commend me to the place. If a man should die

And leave his body here, it were all one As he were twenty fathoms underground.

*Her.* Where is our common Friend ?

*Mar.* A ghost, methinks — The Spirit of a murdered man, for instance —

Might have fine room to ramble about here, A grand domain to squeak and gibber in.

*Her.* Lost Man ! if thou have any close-pent guilt

Pressing upon thy heart, and this the hour Of visitation —

*Mar.* A bold word from you !

*Her.* Restore him, Heaven !

*Mar.* The desperate Wretch ! — A Flower,

Fairest of all flowers, was she once, but now

They have snapped her from the stem — Poh ! let her lie

Besoiled with mire, and let the houseless snail

Feed on her leaves. You knew her well — ay, there,

Old Man ! you were a very Lynx, you knew The worm was in her —

*Her.* Mercy! Sir, what mean you?

*Mar.* You have a Daughter!

*Her.* Oh that she were here! —  
She hath an eye that sinks into all hearts,  
And if I have in aught offended you,  
Soon would her gentle voice make peace  
between us.

*Mar. (aside).* I do believe he weeps —  
I could weep too —

There is a vein of her voice that runs  
through his:

Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth  
From the first moment that I loved the  
Maid;

And for his sake I loved her more: these  
tears —

I did not think that aught was left in me <sup>190</sup>  
Of what I have been — yes, I thank thee,  
Heaven!

One happy thought has passed across my  
mind.

— It may not be — I am cut off from man;  
No more shall I be man — no more shall I  
Have human feelings! — (*To Herbert*) —

Now, for a little more

About your Daughter!

*Her.* Troops of armed men,  
Met in the roads, would bless us; little chil-  
dren,

Rushing along in the full tide of play,  
Stood silent as we passed them! I have  
heard

The boisterous carman, in the miry road,  
Check his loud whip and hail us with mild  
voice, <sup>201</sup>

And speak with milder voice to his poor  
beasts.

*Mar.* And whither were you going?

*Her.* Learn, young Man,  
To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery.  
Whether too much for patience, or, like  
mine,

Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

*Mar.* Now, this is as it should be!

*Her.* I am weak! —  
My Daughter does not know how weak I  
am;

And, as thou see'st, under the arch of  
heaven

Here do I stand, alone, to helplessness, <sup>210</sup>  
By the good God, our common Father,  
doomed! —

But I had once a spirit and an arm —

*Mar.* Now, for a word about your  
Barony:

I fancy when you left the Holy Land,  
And came to — what's your title — eh?  
your claims

Were undisputed!

*Her.* Like a mendicant,  
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood  
alone; —

I murmured — but, remembering Him who  
feeds

The pelican and ostrich of the desert,  
From my own threshold I looked up to  
Heaven <sup>220</sup>

And did not want glimmerings of quiet  
hope.

So, from the court I passed, and down the  
brook,

Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak  
I came; and when I felt its cooling shade,  
I sat me down, and cannot but believe —  
While in my lap I held my little Babe  
And clasped her to my heart, my heart that  
ached

More with delight than grief — I heard a  
voice

Such as by Cherith on Elijah called;  
It said, "I will be with thee." A little  
boy, <sup>230</sup>

A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was  
gone,

Hailed us as if he had been sent from  
heaven,

And said, with tears, that he would be our  
guide:

I had a better guide — that innocent  
Babe —

Her, who hath saved me, to this hour, from  
harm,

From cold, from hunger, penury, and  
death;

To whom I owe the best of all the good  
I have, or wish for, upon earth — and more  
And higher far than lies within earth's  
bounds:

Therefore I bless her: when I think of  
Man, <sup>240</sup>

I bless her with sad spirit, — when of God,  
I bless her in the fulness of my joy!

*Mar.* The name of daughter in his  
mouth, he prays!

With nerves so steady, that the very flies  
Sit unmolested on his staff. — Innocent! —  
If he were innocent — then he would  
tremble

And be disturbed, as I am. (*Turning aside.*)  
I have read

In Story, what men now alive have witnessed,

How, when the People's mind was racked with doubt,

Appeal was made to the great Judge: the Accused <sup>250</sup>

With naked feet walked over burning ploughshares.

Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared For a like trial, but more merciful.

Why else have I been led to this bleak Waste?

Bare is it, without house or track, and destitute

Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea.

Here will I leave him — here — All-seeing God!

Such as *he* is, and sore perplexed as I am, I will commit him to this final *Ordeal*! —

He heard a voice — a shepherd-lad came to him <sup>260</sup>

And was his guide; if once, why not again, And in this desert? If never — then the whole

Of what he says, and looks, and does, and is,

Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave him here

To cold and hunger! — Pain is of the heart, And what are a few throes of bodily suffering

If they can waken one pang of remorse?

[*Goes up to Herbert.*]

Old Man! my wrath is as a flame burnt out,

It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here

Led by my hand to save thee from perdition; <sup>270</sup>

Thou wilt have time to breathe and think —

*Her.* Oh, Mercy!

*Mar.* I know the need that all men have of mercy,

And therefore leave thee to a righteous judgment.

*Her.* My Child, my blessed Child!

*Mar.* No more of that;

Thou wilt have many guides if thou art innocent;

Yea, from the utmost corners of the earth, That Woman will come o'er this Waste to save thee.

[*He pauses and looks at Herbert's staff.*]

Ha! what is here? and carved by her own hand!

[*Reads upon the staff.*]

"I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.

He that puts his trust in me shall not fail!" <sup>280</sup>

Yes, be it so; — repent and be forgiven — God and that staff are now thy only guides.

[*He leaves Herbert on the Moor.*]

SCENE — *An eminence, a Beacon on the summit*

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, etc. etc.

*Several of the Band (confusedly).* But patience!

*One of the Band.* Curses on that Traitor, Oswald! —

Our Captain made a prey to foul device! —

*Len.* (*to Wal.*). His tool, the wandering Beggar, made last night

A plain confession, such as leaves no doubt, Knowing what otherwise we know too well, That she revealed the truth. Stand by me now;

For rather would I have a nest of vipers Between my breast-plate and my skin, than make <sup>290</sup>

Oswald my special enemy, if you

Deny me your support.

*Lacy.* We have been fooled —

But for the motive?

*Wal.* Natures such as his

Spin motives out of their own bowels, Lacy! I learned this when I was a Confessor.

I know him well; there needs no other motive

Than that most strange incontinence in crime

Which haunts this Oswald. Power is life to him

And breath and being; where he cannot govern,

He will destroy.

*Lacy.* To have been trapped like moles! — <sup>300</sup>

Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for motives:

There is no crime from which this man would shrink;

He recks not human law; and I have noticed

That often when the name of God is uttered,

A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

*Len.* Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride has built

Some uncouth superstition of its own.

*Wal.* I have seen traces of it.

*Len.* Once he headed  
A band of Pirates in the Norway seas;  
And when the King of Denmark summoned  
him 310

To the oath of fealty, I well remember,  
'T was a strange answer that he made; he  
said,

"I hold of Spirits, and the Sun in heaven."  
*Lacy.* He is no madman.

*Wal.* A most subtle doctor  
Were that man, who could draw the line  
that parts

Pride and her daughter, Cruelty, from  
Madness,

That should be scourged, not pitied. Rest-  
less Minds,

Such Minds as find amid their fellow-men  
No heart that loves them, none that they  
can love,

Will turn perforce and seek for sympathy  
In dim relation to imagined Beings. 321

*One of the Band.* What if he mean to  
offer up our Captain

An expiation and a sacrifice  
To those infernal fiends!

*Wal.* Now, if the event  
Should be as Lennox has foretold, then  
swear,

My Friends, his heart shall have as many  
wounds

As there are daggers here.

*Lacy.* What need of swearing!

*One of the Band.* Let us away!

*Another.* Away!

*A third.* Hark! how the horns  
Of those Scotch Rovers echo through the  
vale.

*Lacy.* Stay you behind; and when the sun  
is down, 330

Light up this beacon.

*One of the Band.* You shall be obeyed.  
[*They go out together.*]

SCENE — *The Wood on the edge of the  
Moor*

MARMADUKE (*alone*).

*Mar.* Deep, deep and vast, vast beyond  
human thought,  
Yet calm. — I could believe, that there was  
here

The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,  
Remembered terror, there is peace and  
rest.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha! my dear Captain.

*Mar.* A later meeting, Oswald,  
Would have been better timed.

*Osw.* Alone, I see;  
You have done your duty. I had hopes,  
which now

I feel that you will justify.

*Mar.* I had fears,  
From which I have freed myself — but 't is  
my wish 340

To be alone, and therefore we must part.

*Osw.* Nay, then — I am mistaken.  
There's a weakness

About you still; you talk of solitude —  
I am your friend.

*Mar.* What need of this assurance  
At any time? and why given now?

*Osw.* Because  
You are now in truth my Master; you have  
taught me

What there is not another living man  
Had strength to teach; — and therefore  
gratitude

Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.

*Mar.* Wherefore press this on me?

*Osw.* Because I feel  
That you have shown, and by a signal in-  
stance, 351

How they who would be just must seek the  
rule

By diving for it into their own bosoms.

To-day you have thrown off a tyranny

That lives but in the torpid acquiescence

Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny

Of the world's masters, with the musty rules  
By which they uphold their craft from age  
to age:

You have obeyed the only law that sense  
Submits to recognise; the immediate law, 360  
From the clear light of circumstances, flashed  
Upon an independent Intellect.

Henceforth new prospects open on your path;  
Your faculties should grow with the demand;  
I still will be your friend, will cleave to you  
Through good and evil, obloquy and scorn,  
Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

*Mar.* I would be left alone.

*Osw.* (*exultingly*). I know your motives!  
I am not of the world's presumptuous judges,  
Who damn where they can neither see nor  
feel, 370

With a hard-hearted ignorance; your strug-  
gles

I witnessed, and now hail your victory.

*Mar.* Spare me awhile that greeting.

*Osw.* It may be,

That some there are, squeamish half-thinking cowards,

Who will turn pale upon you, call you murderer,

And you will walk in solitude among them.

A mighty evil for a strong-built mind! —

Join twenty tapers of unequal height

And light them joined, and you will see the less

How't will burn down the taller; and they all

Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude! —  
The Eagle lives in Solitude. <sup>380</sup>

*Mar.* Even so,

The Sparrow so on the housetop, and I,  
The weakest of God's creatures, stand resolved

To abide the issue of my act, alone.

*Osw.* Now would you? and for ever? —  
My young Friend,

As time advances either we become  
The prey or masters of our own past deeds.  
Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no;  
And if good Angels fail, slack in their duty,  
Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,  
Are still forthcoming; some which, though  
they bear <sup>392</sup>

Ill names, can render no ill services,  
In recompense for what themselves required.

So meet extremes in this mysterious world,  
And opposites thus melt into each other.

*Mar.* Time, since Man first drew breath,  
has never moved

With such a weight upon his wings as now;  
But they will soon be lightened.

*Osw.* Ay, look up —

Cast round you your mind's eye, and you  
will learn <sup>400</sup>

Fortitude is the child of Enterprise:  
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly  
Because they carry in themselves an earnest  
That we can suffer greatly.

*Mar.* Very true.

*Osw.* Action is transitory — a step, a blow,  
The motion of a muscle — this way or that —  
'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And shares the nature of infinity. <sup>410</sup>

*Mar.* Truth — and I feel it.

*Osw.* What! if you had bid  
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy

And the light dancing of the thoughtless heart;

It is the toy of fools, and little fit  
For such a world as this. The wise abjure  
All thoughts whose idle composition lives  
In the entire forgetfulness of pain.

— I see I have disturbed you.

*Mar.* By no means.

*Osw.* Compassion! — pity! — pride can  
do without them;

And what if you should never know them  
more! — <sup>420</sup>

He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,

Finds ease because another feels it too.

If e'er I open out this heart of mine

It shall be for a nobler end — to teach

And not to purchase puling sympathy.

— Nay, you are pale.

*Mar.* It may be so.

*Osw.* Remorse —  
It cannot live with thought; think on, think  
on,

And it will die. What! in this universe,  
Where the least things control the greatest,  
where

The faintest breath that breathes can move  
a world; <sup>430</sup>

What! feel remorse, where, if a cat had  
sneezed,

A leaf had fallen, the thing had never been  
Whose very shadow gnaws us to the vitals.

*Mar.* Now, whither are you wandering?  
That a man

So used to suit his language to the time,  
Should thus so widely differ from himself —  
It is most strange.

*Osw.* Murder! — what's in the word! —  
I have no cases by me ready made

To fit all deeds. Carry him to the Camp! —  
A shallow project; — you of late have seen

More deeply, taught us that the institutes  
Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation <sup>442</sup>

Banished from human intercourse, exist  
Only in our relations to the brutes

That make the fields their dwelling. If a  
snake

Crawl from beneath our feet we do not  
ask

A license to destroy him: our good governors  
Hedge in the life of every pest and plague

That bears the shape of man; and for what  
purpose,

But to protect themselves from extirpa-  
tion? — <sup>450</sup>

This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.

*Mar.* My Office is fulfilled — the Man is now  
Delivered to the Judge of all things.

*Osw.* Dead!

*Mar.* I have borne my burthen to its destined end.

*Osw.* This instant we'll return to our companions —

Oh how I long to see their faces again!

*Enter IDONEA, with Pilgrims who continue their journey.*

*Idon.* (after some time). What, Marnaduke! now thou art mine for ever.  
And Oswald, too! (To Marnaduke.) On will we to my Father  
With the glad tidings which this day hath brought;

We'll go together, and, such proof received  
Of his own rights restored, his gratitude  
To God above will make him feel for ours.

*Osw.* I interrupt you?

*Idon.* Think not so.

*Mar.* Idonea,  
That I should ever live to see this moment!

*Idon.* Forgive me. — Oswald knows it all — he knows,

Each word of that unhappy letter fell  
As a blood drop from my heart.

*Osw.* 'T was even so.

*Mar.* I have much to say, but for whose ear? — not thine.

*Idon.* Ill can I bear that look — Plead for me, Oswald!

You are my Father's Friend.

(To Marnaduke.) Alas, you know not,  
And never can you know, how much he loved me.

Twice had he been to me a father, twice  
Had given me breath, and was I not to be  
His daughter, once his daughter? could I withstand

His pleading face, and feel his clasping arms,

And hear his prayer that I would not forsake him

In his old age —

*[Hides her face.]*  
*Mar.* Patience — Heaven grant me patience! —

She weeps, she weeps — my brain shall burn for hours

Ere I can shed a tear.

*Idon.* I was a woman;

And, balancing the hopes that are the dearest

To womankind with duty to my Father,  
I yielded up those precious hopes, which  
nought

On earth could else have wrested from me;  
— if erring,

Oh let me be forgiven!

*Mar.* I do forgive thee.

*Idon.* But take me to your arms — this breast, alas!

It throbs, and you have a heart that does not feel it.

*Mar.* (exultingly). She is innocent.

*[He embraces her.]*

*Osw.* (aside). Were I a Moralist,  
I should make wondrous revolution here;  
It were a quaint experiment to show  
The beauty of truth —

*[Addressing them.]*  
I see I interrupt you;  
I shall have business with you, Marnaduke;  
Follow me to the Hostel. *[Exit Oswald.]*

*Idon.* Marnaduke,  
This is a happy day. My Father soon  
Shall sun himself before his native doors;  
The lame, the hungry, will be welcome there.

No more shall he complain of wasted strength,

Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying heart;  
His good works will be balm and life to him.

*Mar.* This is most strange! — I know not what it was,

But there was something which most plainly said,

That thou wert innocent.

*Idon.* How innocent! —  
Oh heavens! you've been deceived.

*Mar.* Thou art a Woman,  
To bring perdition on the universe.

*Idon.* Already I've been punished to the height

Of my offence. *[Smiling affectionately.]*

I see you love me still,  
The labours of my hand are still your joy;

Bethink you of the hour when on your shoulder

I hung this belt.

*[Pointing to the belt on which was suspended Herbert's scrip.]*

*Mar.* Mercy of Heaven!

*Idon.* What ails you! *[Sinks.]*

*Mar.* The scrip that held his food, and I forgot

To give it back again!

*Idon.* What mean your words?



Mar. I know not what I said — all may  
be well. 511

Idon. That smile hath life in it !

Mar. This road is perilous;  
I will attend you to a Hut that stands  
Near the wood's edge — rest there to-night,  
I pray you:  
For me, I have business, as you heard, with  
Oswald,  
But will return to you by break of day.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### ACT IV

SCENE — *A desolate prospect — a ridge of  
rocks — a Chapel on the summit of one  
— Moon behind the rocks — night  
stormy — irregular sound of a Bell*

HERBERT enters exhausted.

Her. That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed  
to guide me,  
But now it mocks my steps; its fitful stroke  
Can scarcely be the work of human hands.  
Hear me, ye Men, upon the cliffs, if such  
There be who pray nightly before the Altar.  
Oh that I had but strength to reach the  
place !  
My Child — my child — dark — dark — I  
faint — this wind —  
These stifling blasts — God help me !

*Enter ELDRED.*

Eld. Better this bare rock,  
Though it were tottering over a man's head,  
Than a tight case of dungeon walls for  
shelter 10  
From such rough dealing.

[*A moaning voice is heard.*]

Ha ! what sound is that ?  
Trees creaking in the wind (but none are  
here)  
Send forth such noises — and that weary  
bell !  
Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-night  
Is ringing it — 't would stop a Saint in  
prayer,  
And that — what is it ? never was sound so  
like

A human groan. Ha ! what is here ?  
Poor Man —

Murdered ! alas ! speak — speak, I am your  
friend:

No answer — hush — lost wretch, he lifts  
his hand

And lays it to his heart — (*Kneels to him.*)

I pray you speak ! 30  
What has befallen you ?

Her. (*feebly.*) A stranger has done this,  
And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

Eld. Nay, think not so : come, let me  
raise you up: [*Raises him.*]

This is a dismal place — well — that is  
well —

I was too fearful — take me for your guide  
And your support — my hut is not far off.

[*Draws him gently off the stage.*]

SCENE — *A room in the Hostel*

MARMADUKE and OSWALD.

Mar. But for Idonea ! — I have cause to  
think

That she is innocent.

Osw. Leave that thought awhile,  
As one of those beliefs, which in their hearts  
Lovers lock up as pearls, though oft no  
better 30

Than feathers clinging to their points of  
passion.

This day's event has laid on me the duty  
Of opening out my story; you must hear it,  
And without further preface. — In my  
youth,

Except for that abatement which is paid  
By envy as a tribute to desert,  
I was the pleasure of all hearts, the darling  
Of every tongue — as you are now. You've  
heard

That I embarked for Syria. On our voyage  
Was hatched among the crew a foul Con-  
spiracy 40

Against my honour, in the which our Cap-  
tain

Was, I believed, prime Agent. The wind  
fell;

We lay becalmed week after week, until  
The water of the vessel was exhausted;  
I felt a double fever in my veins,  
Yet rage suppressed itself; — to a deep still-  
ness

Did my pride tame my pride; — for many  
days,

On a dead sea under a burning sky,  
I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted

By man and nature; — if a breeze had  
blown, 50

It might have found its way into my heart,  
And I had been — no matter — do you mark  
me ?

*Mar.* Quick — to the point — if any untold crime  
Doth haunt your memory.

*Osw.* Patience, hear me further ! —  
One day in silence did we drift at noon  
By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and bare;

No food was there, no drink, no grass, no shade,

No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form  
Inanimate large as the body of man,  
Nor any living thing whose lot of life      60  
Might stretch beyond the measure of one moon.

To dig for water on the spot, the Captain  
Landed with a small troop, myself being one:

There I reproached him with his treachery.  
Imperious at all times, his temper rose;  
He struck me; and that instant had I killed him,

And put an end to his insolence, but my Comrades

Rushed in between us: then did I insist  
(All hated him, and I was stung to madness)

That we should leave him there, alive ! —  
we did so.      70

*Mar.* And he was famished ?

*Osw.* Naked was the spot;  
Methinks I see it now — how in the sun  
Its stony surface glittered like a shield;  
And in that miserable place we left him,  
Alone but for a swarm of minute creatures  
Not one of which could help him while alive,

Or inourn him dead.

*Mar.* A man by men cast off,  
Left without burial ! nay, not dead nor dying,

But standing, walking, stretching forth his arms,

In all things like ourselves, but in the agony      80

With which he called for mercy; and —  
even so —

He was forsaken ?

*Osw.* There is a power in sounds:  
The cries he uttered might have stopped the boat

That bore us through the water —

*Mar.* You returned  
Upon that dismal hearing — did you not ?

*Osw.* Some scoffed at him with hellish mockery,

And laughed so loud it seemed that the smooth sea

Did from some distant region echo us.

*Mar.* We all are of one blood, our veins  
are filled      85

At the same poisonous fountain !

*Osw.* 'T was an island  
Only by sufferance of the winds and waves,  
Which with their foam could cover it at will.

I know not how he perished; but the calm,  
The same dead calm, continued many days.

*Mar.* But his own crime had brought on  
him this doom,

His wickedness prepared it; these expedients

Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

*Osw.* The man was famished, and was innocent !

*Mar.* Impossible !

*Osw.* The man had never wronged me.

*Mar.* Banish the thought, crush it, and  
be at peace.      100

His guilt was marked — these things could  
never be

Were there not eyes that see, and for good ends,

Where ours are baffled.

*Osw.* I had been deceived.

*Mar.* And from that hour the miserable man

No more was heard of ?

*Osw.* I had been betrayed.

*Mar.* And he found no deliverance !

*Osw.* The Crew  
Gave me a hearty welcome; they had laid

The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,

Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed.

So we pursued our voyage: when we landed,  
The tale was spread abroad; my power at once      111

Shrunk from me; plans and schemes, and  
lofty hopes —

All vanished. I gave way — do you attend ?

*Mar.* The Crew deceived you ?

*Osw.* Nay, command yourself.

*Mar.* It is a dismal night — how the wind  
howls !

*Osw.* I hid my head within a Convent,  
there

Lay passive as a dormouse in mid-winter.

That was no life for me — I was o'erthrown,  
But not destroyed.

*Mar.* The proofs — you ought to have

The guilt — have touched it — felt it at  
your heart — 120  
As I have done.

*Osw.* A fresh tide of Crusaders  
Drove by the place of my retreat: three  
nights

Did constant meditation dry my blood;  
Three sleepless nights I passed in sounding  
on,

Through words and things, a dim and  
perilous way;

And, wheresoe'er I turned me, I beheld  
A slavery compared to which the dungeon  
And clanking chains are perfect liberty.  
You understand me — I was comforted;  
I saw that every possible shape of action  
Might lead to good — I saw it and burst  
forth 131

Thirsting for some of those exploits that fill  
The earth for sure redemption of lost peace.

[*Marking Marmaduke's countenance.*]

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity  
Subsided in a moment, like a wind  
That drops down dead out of a sky it  
vexed.

And yet I had within me evermore  
A salient spring of energy; I mounted  
From action up to action with a mind  
That never rested — without meat or drink  
Have I lived many days — my sleep was  
bound 141

To purposes of reason — not a dream  
But had a continuity and substance  
That waking life had never power to give.

*Mar.* O wretched Human-kind! — Until  
the mystery  
Of all this world is solved, well may we  
envy

The worm, that, underneath a stone whose  
weight

Would crush the lion's paw with mortal  
anguish,

Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep,  
in safety.

Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those  
traitors? 150

*Osw.* Give not to them a thought. From  
Palestine

We marched to Syria: oft I left the Camp,  
When all that multitude of hearts was  
still,

And followed on, through woods of gloomy  
cedar,

Into deep chasms troubled by roaring  
streams;

Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed  
The moonlight desert, and the moonlight  
sea:

In these my lonely wanderings I perceived  
What mighty objects do impress their  
forms

To elevate our intellectual being; 160  
And felt, if aught on earth deserves a  
curse,

'Tis that worst principle of ill which dooms  
A thing so great to perish self-consumed.  
— So much for my remorse!

*Mar.* Unhappy Man!

*Osw.* When from these forms I turned  
to contemplate

The World's opinions and her usages,  
I seemed a Being who had passed alone  
Into a region of futurity,

Whose natural element was freedom —

*Mar.* Stop —

I may not, cannot, follow thee.

*Osw.* You must.

I had been nourished by the sickly food 171  
Of popular applause. I now perceived  
That we are praised, only as men in us  
Do recognise some image of themselves,  
An abject counterpart of what they are,  
Or the empty thing that they would wish  
to be.

I felt that merit has no surer test  
Than obloquy; that, if we wish to serve  
The world in substance, not deceive by  
show,

We must become obnoxious to its hate, 180  
Or fear disguised in simulated scorn.

*Mar.* I pity, can forgive, you; but those  
wretches —

That monstrous perfidy!

*Osw.* Keep down your wrath.

False Shame discarded, spurious Fame de-  
spised,

Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found  
Life stretched before me smooth as some  
broad way

Cleared for a monarch's progress. Priests  
might spin

Their veil, but not for me — 't was in fit  
place

Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been,  
And in that dream had left my native land,  
One of Love's simple bondsmen — the soft  
chain 191

Was off for ever; and the men, from whom  
This liberation came, you would destroy:  
Join me in thanks for their blind services.

*Mar.* 'Tis a strange aching that, when we would curse  
And cannot. — You have betrayed me — I have done —  
I am content — I know that he is guiltless —  
That both are guiltless, without spot or stain,  
Mutually consecrated. Poor old Man!  
And I had heart for this, because thou lovedst 200

Her who from very infancy had been  
Light to thy path, warmth to thy blood! —  
Together [Turning to Oswald.]  
We propped his steps, he leaned upon us both.

*Osw.* Ay, we are coupled by a chain of adamant;  
Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to enlarge  
Man's intellectual empire. We subsist  
In slavery; all is slavery; we receive  
Laws, but we ask not whence those laws have come;  
We need an inward sting to goad us on.

*Mar.* Have you betrayed me? Speak to that.

*Osw.* The mask, 210  
Which for a season I have stooped to wear,  
Must be cast off. — Know then that I was urged,  
(For other impulse let it pass) was driven,  
To seek for sympathy, because I saw  
In you a mirror of my youthful self;  
I would have made us equal once again,  
But that was a vain hope. You have struck home,  
With a few drops of blood cut short the business;  
Therein for ever you must yield to me.  
But what is done will save you from the blank 220  
Of living without knowledge that you live:  
Now you are suffering — for the future day,  
'Tis his who will command it. — Think of my story —  
Herbert is innocent.

*Mar.* (in a faint voice, and doubtingly).

You do but echo

My own wild words?

*Osw.* Young Man, the seed must lie  
Hid in the earth, or there can be no harvest;

'Tis Nature's law. What I have done in darkness

I will avow before the face of day.  
Herbert is innocent.

*Mar.* What fiend could prompt  
This action? Innocent! — oh, breaking heart! — 230  
Alive or dead, I'll find him. [Exit.]

*Osw.* Alive — perdition! [Exit.]

SCENE — *The inside of a poor Cottage*

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

*Idon.* The storm beats hard — Mercy  
for poor or rich,  
Whose heads are shelterless in such a night!  
A Voice without. Holla! to bed, good  
Folks, within!

*Elea.* O save us!

*Idon.* What can this mean?

*Elea.* Alas, for my poor husband! —  
We'll have a counting of our flocks to-morrow;  
The wolf keeps festival these stormy nights:  
Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers  
[The voices die away in the distance.]  
Returning from their Feast — my heart  
beats so —

A noise at midnight does so frighten me. 240

*Idon.* Hush!

[Listening.]

*Elea.* They are gone. On such a  
night my husband,  
Dragged from his bed, was cast into a dun-  
geon,  
Where, hid from me, he counted many  
years,

A criminal in no one's eyes but theirs —  
Not even in theirs — whose brutal violence  
So dealt with him.

*Idon.* I have a noble Friend  
First among youths of knightly breeding,  
One

Who lives but to protect the weak or injured.  
There again! [Listening.]

*Elea.* 'Tis my husband's foot. Good  
Eldred

Has a kind heart; but his imprisonment 250  
Has made him fearful, and he'll never be  
The man he was.

*Idon.* I will retire; — good night!  
[She goes within.]

Enter ELDRED (hides a bundle).

*Eld.* Not yet in bed, Eleanor! — there  
are stains in that frock which must be  
washed out.

*Elea.* What has befallen you ?

*Eld.* I am belated, and you must know the cause — (*speaking low*) that is the blood of an unhappy Man.

*Elea.* Oh ! we are undone for ever. 260

*Eld.* Heaven forbid that I should lift my hand against any man. Eleanor, I have shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to think of it.

*Elea.* Where, where is he ?

*Eld.* I have done him no harm, but — it will be forgiven me; it would not have been so once.

*Elea.* You have not buried anything ? You are no richer than when you left me ? 271

*Eld.* Be at peace; I am innocent.

*Elea.* Then God be thanked —

[*A short pause; she falls upon his neck.*]

*Eld.* To-night I met with an old Man lying stretched upon the ground — a sad spectacle: I raised him up with a hope that we might shelter and restore him.

*Elea.* (*as if ready to run*). Where is he ? You were not able to bring him all the way with you; let us return, I can help you. [*Eldred shakes his head.* 281

*Eld.* He did not seem to wish for life: as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes — he waved his hand, as if it were all useless; and I let him sink again to the ground.

*Elea.* Oh that I had been by your side !

*Eld.* I tell you his hands and his body were cold — how could I disturb his last moments ? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep. 292

*Elea.* But, for the stains of blood —

*Eld.* He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut; but I think his malady was cold and hunger.

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble. 299

*Eld.* Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour ? I come home, and this is my comfort !

*Elea.* But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease ?

*Eld.* I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child — his Daughter — (*starting as if he heard a noise*). What is that ?

*Elea.* Eldred, you are a father.

*Eld.* God knows what was in my heart, and will not curse my son for my sake. 311

*Elea.* But you prayed by him ? you waited the hour of his release ?

*Eld.* The night was wasting fast; I have no friend; I am spited by the world — his wound terrified me — if I had brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms ! — I am sure I heard something breathing — and this chair ! 319

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, you will die alone. You will have nobody to close your eyes — no hand to grasp your dying hand — I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us all.

*Eld.* Have you forgot your own troubles when I was in the dungeon ?

*Elea.* And you left him alive ?

*Eld.* Alive ! — the damps of death were upon him — he could not have survived an hour.

*Elea.* In the cold, cold night. 330

*Eld.* (*in a savage tone*). Ay, and his head was bare; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it. — You will never rest till I am brought to a felon's end.

*Elea.* Is there nothing to be done ? cannot we go to the Convent ?

*Eld.* Ay, and say at once that I murdered him ! 339

*Elea.* Eldred, I know that ours is the only house upon the Waste; let us take heart; this Man may be rich; and could he be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us.

*Eld.* 'Tis all in vain.

*Elea.* But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may have children — let us return to the spot; we may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him. 350

*Eld.* He will never open them more; even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed as if he had been blind.

*Idon.* (*rushing out*). It is, it is, my Father —

*Eld.* We are betrayed (*looking at Idonea*).

*Elea.* His Daughter ! — God have mercy ! (*turning to Idonea*).

*Idon.* (*sinking down*). Oh ! lift me up and carry me to the place. 360

You are safe; the whole world shall not harm you.

*Elea.* This Lady is his Daughter.

*Eld. (moved).* I'll lead you to the spot.  
*Idon. (springing up).* Alive! — you  
 heard him breathe? quick, quick —  
 [Exeunt.]

## ACT V

SCENE — *A wood on the edge of the Waste*

*Enter OSWALD and a Forester.*

*For.* He leaned upon the bridge that  
 spans the glen,  
 And down into the bottom cast his eye,  
 That fastened there, as it would check the  
 current.

*Osw.* He listened too; did you not say  
 he listened?

*For.* As if there came such moaning  
 from the flood

As is heard often after stormy nights.

*Osw.* But did he utter nothing?

*For.* See him there!

*MARMADUKE appearing.*

*Mar.* Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged  
 freebooters;

That is no substance which ye settle on!

*For.* His senses play him false; and see,  
 his arms  
 Outspread, as if to save himself from fall-<sup>10</sup>  
 ing! —

Some terrible phantom I believe is now  
 Passing before him, such as God will not  
 Permit to visit any but a man  
 Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[Marmaduke disappears.]

*Osw.* The game is up! —

*For.* If it be needful, Sir,  
 I will assist you to lay hands upon  
 him.

*Osw.* No, no, my Friend, you may pursue  
 your business —

'T is a poor wretch of an unsettled mind,  
 Who has a trick of straying from his keep-<sup>20</sup>  
 ers;

We must be gentle. Leave him to my  
 care. [Exit Forester.]

If his own eyes play false with him, these  
 freaks

Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine;  
 The goal is reached. My Master shall be-  
 come

A shadow of myself — made by myself.

SCENE — *The edge of the Moor*

*MARMADUKE and ELDRÉD enter from  
 opposite sides.*

*Mar. (raising his eyes and perceiving  
 Eldred).* In any corner of this  
 savage Waste,  
 Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old  
 Man?

*Eld.* I heard —

*Mar.* You heard him, where? when  
 heard him?

*Eld.* I heard. As you know,  
 The first hours of last night were rough  
 with storm:

I had been out in search of a stray heifer;<sup>29</sup>  
 Returning late, I heard a moaning sound;  
 Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived  
 me,

I hurried on, when straight a second moan,  
 A human voice distinct, struck on my ear,  
 So guided, distant a few steps, I found  
 An aged Man, and such as you describe.

*Mar.* You heard! — he called you to  
 him? Of all men

The best and kindest! — but where is he?  
 guide me,  
 That I may see him.

*Eld.* On a ridge of rocks  
 A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now:  
 The bell is left, which no one dares remove;  
 And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the  
 peak,<sup>42</sup>

It rings, as if a human hand were there  
 To pull the cord. I guess he must have  
 heard it;

And it had led him towards the precipice,  
 To climb up to the spot whence the sound  
 came;

But he had failed through weakness. From  
 his hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the  
 brink

Of a small pool of water he was laid,  
 As if he had stooped to drink, and so re-  
 mained<sup>50</sup>

Without the strength to rise.

*Mar.* Well, well, he lives,  
 And all is safe: what said he?

*Eld.* But few words:  
 He only spake to me of a dear Daughter,  
 Who, so he feared, would never see him  
 more;

And of a Stranger to him, One by whom  
 He had been sore misused; but he forgave

The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are troubled —

Perhaps you are his son ?

*Mar.* The All-seeing knows, I did not think, he had a living Child. — But whither did you carry him ?

*Eld.* He was torn, His head was bruised, and there was blood about him — 61

*Mar.* That was no work of mine.

*Eld.* Nor was it mine.

*Mar.* But had he strength to walk ? I could have borne him

A thousand miles.

*Eld.* I am in poverty, And know how busy are the tongues of men; My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one Whose good deeds will not stand by their own light; And, though it smote me more than words can tell, I left him.

*Mar.* I believe that there are phantoms, That in the shape of man do cross our path On evil instigation, to make sport 71 Of our distress — and thou art one of them ! But things substantial have so pressed on me —

*Eld.* My wife and children came into my mind.

*Mar.* Oh Monster ! Monster ! there are three of us, And we shall howl together.

[After a pause and in a feeble voice.

I am deserted At my worst need, my crimes have in a net (Pointing to Eldred) Entangled this poor man. — Where was it ? where ? 71

[Dragging him along.

*Eld.* 'Tis needless; spare your violence. His Daughter —

*Mar.* Ay, in the word a thousand scorpions lodge 80 This old man had a Daughter.

*Eld.* To the spot I hurried back with her. — O save me, Sir, From such a journey ! — there was a black tree,

A single tree; she thought it was her Father. —

Oh Sir, I would not see that hour again For twenty lives. The daylight dawned, and now —

Nay; hear my tale, 't is fit that you should hear it —

As we approached, a solitary crow Rose from the spot; — the Daughter clapped her hands,

And then I heard a shriek so terrible 90 [Marmaduke shrinks back. The startled bird quivered upon the wing.

*Mar.* Dead, dead ! —

*Eld.* (after a pause). A dismal matter, Sir, for me, And seems the like for you; if 't is your wish,

I'll lead you to his Daughter; but 't were best

That she should be prepared; I'll go before.

*Mar.* There will be need of preparation. [Eldred goes off.

*Elea.* (enters). Master ! Your limbs sink under you, shall I support you ?

*Mar.* (taking her arm). Woman, I've lent my body to the service Which now thou tak'st upon thee. God forbid

That thou shouldst ever meet a like occasion 100

With such a purpose in thine heart as mine was.

*Elea.* Oh, why have I to do with things like these ? [Exeunt.

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRÉD'S cottage

IDONEA seated — enter ELDRÉD.

*Eld.* Your Father, Lady, from a wilful hand

Has met unkindness; so indeed he told me, And you remember such was my report:

From what has just befallen me I have cause

To fear the very worst.

*Idon.* My Father is dead; Why dost thou come to me with words like these ?

*Eld.* A wicked Man should answer for his crimes. 109

*Idon.* Thou seest me what I am.

*Eld.* It was most heinous, And doth call out for vengeance.

*Idon.* Do not add, I prithee, to the harm thou 'st done already.

*Eld.* Hereafter you will thank me for this service.

Hard by, a Man I met, who, from plain proofs

Of interfering Heaven, I have no doubt,  
Laid hands upon your Father. Fit it were  
You should prepare to meet him.

*Idon.* I have nothing  
To do with others; help me to my Father —  
[*She turns and sees Marmaduke leaning  
on Eleanor — throws herself upon his  
neck, and after some time,*

In joy I met thee, but a few hours past;  
And thus we meet again; one human stay  
Is left me still in thee. Nay, shake not so.

*Mar.* In such a wilderness — to see no  
thing, 122

No, not the pitying moon!

*Idon.* And perish so.

*Mar.* Without a dog to moan for him.

*Idon.* Think not of it,  
But enter there and see him how he sleeps,  
Tranquil as he had died in his own bed.

*Mar.* Tranquil — why not?

*Idon.* Oh, peace!

*Mar.* He is at peace;

His body is at rest: there was a plot,  
A hideous plot, against the soul of man:  
It took effect — and yet I baffled it, 130  
In some degree.

*Idon.* Between us stood, I thought,  
A cup of consolation, filled from Heaven  
For both our needs; must I, and in thy pres-  
ence,

Alone partake of it? — Belovèd Marmaduke!

*Mar.* Give me a reason why the wisest  
thing

That the earth owns shall never choose to  
die,

But some one must be near to count his  
groans.

The wounded deer retires to solitude,  
And dies in solitude: all things but man,  
All die in solitude.

[*Moving towards the cottage door.*

Mysterious God, 140

If she had never lived I had not done it! —  
*Idon.* Alas, the thought of such a cruel  
death

Has overwhelmed him. — I must follow.

*Eld.* Lady!

You will do well; (*she goes*) unjust suspicion  
may

Cleave to this Stranger: if, upon his enter-  
ing,

The dead Man heave a groan, or from his  
side

Uplift his hand — that would be evidence.

*Elea.* Shame! Eldred, shame!

*Mar.* (*both returning*). The dead have  
but one face (*to himself*).

And such a Man — so meek and unoffend-  
ing — 149

Helpless and harmless as a babe: a Man,  
By obvious signal to the world's protection,  
Solemnly dedicated — to decoy him! —

*Idon.* Oh, had you seen him living! —

*Mar.* I (*so filled*

With horror is this world) am unto thee  
The thing most precious, that it now con-  
tains:

Therefore through me alone must be re-  
vealed

By whom thy Parent was destroyed, Idonea!  
I have the proofs! —

*Idon.* O miserable Father!  
Thou didst command me to bless all man-  
kind;

Nor to this moment, have I ever wished 160  
Evil to any living thing; but bear me,

Hear me, ye Heavens! — (*kneeling*) — may  
vengeance haunt the fiend

For this most cruel murder: let him live  
And move in terror of the elements;

The thunder send him on his knees to prayer  
In the open streets, and let him think he  
sees,

If e'er he entereth the house of God,  
The roof, self-moved, unsettling o'er his  
head;

And let him, when he would lie down at  
night,

Point to his wife the blood-drops on his  
pillow! 170

*Mar.* My voice was silent, but my heart  
hath joined thee.

*Idon.* (*leaning on Marmaduke*). Left to  
the mercy of that savage Man!

How could he call upon his Child! — O  
Friend! [*Turns to Marmaduke.*

My faithful true and only Comforter.

*Mar.* Ay, come to me and weep. (*He  
kisses her.*) (*To Eldred.*) Yes, Var-  
let, look,

The devils at such sights do clap their hands.  
[*Eldred retires alarmed.*

*Idon.* Thy vest is torn, thy cheek is dead-  
ly pale;

Hast thou pursued the monster?

*Mar.* I have found him. —

Oh! would that thou hadst perished in the  
flames!

*Idon.* Here art thou, then can I be deso-  
late? — 180



*Mar.* There was a time, when this protecting hand  
 Availed against the mighty; never more  
 Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

*Idon.* Wild words for me to hear, for me,  
 an orphan  
 Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven;  
 And, if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope,  
 In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine  
 For closer care; — here, is no malady.

[*Taking his arm.*

*Mar.* There, is a malady —  
 (*Striking his heart and forehead*). And here,  
 and here,

A mortal malady. — I am accurst: 190  
 All nature curses me, and in my heart  
 Thy curse is fixed; the truth must be laid  
 bare.

It must be told, and borne. I am the man,  
 (Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not)  
 Presumptuous above all that ever breathed,  
 Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person  
 Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did be-  
 come

An instrument of Fiends. Through me,  
 through me  
 Thy Father perished.

*Idon.* Perished — by what mischance?

*Mar.* Belovèd! — if I dared, so would I  
 call thee — 200

Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen heart,  
 The extremes of suffering meet in absolute  
 peace. [*He gives her a letter.*

*Idon.* (*reads*). "Be not surprised if you  
 hear that some signal judgment has befallen  
 the man who calls himself your father; he  
 is now with me, as his signature will shew:  
 abstain from conjecture till you see me.

"HERBERT.

"MARMADUKE."

The writing Oswald's; the signature my  
 Father's:

(*Looks steadily at the paper*). And here is  
 yours, — or do my eyes deceive me?  
 You have then seen my Father?

*Mar.* He has leaned  
 Upon this arm.

*Idon.* You led him towards the Convent?

*Mar.* That Convent was Stone-Arthur  
 Castle. Thither 212

We were his guides. I on that night re-  
 solved

That he should wait thy coming till the day  
 Of resurrection.

*Idon.* Miserable Woman,

Too quickly moved, too easily giving way,  
 I put denial on thy suit, and hence,  
 With the disastrous issue of last night,  
 Thy perturbation, and these frantic words.  
 Be calm, I pray thee!

*Mar.*

Oswald —

*Idon.*

Name him not.

*Enter female Beggar.*

*Beg.* And he is dead! — that Moor —  
 how shall I cross it? 221

By night, by day, never shall I be able  
 To travel half a mile alone. — Good Lady!  
 Forgive me! — Saints forgive me. Had I  
 thought

It would have come to this! —

*Idon.* What brings you hither? speak!

*Beg.* (*pointing to Marmaduke*). This in-  
 nocent Gentleman. Sweet heavens!

I told him

Such tales of your dead Father! — God is  
 my judge,

I thought there was no harm: but that bad  
 Man,

He bribed me with his gold, and looked so  
 fierce.

Mercy! I said I know not what — oh pity  
 me — 230

I said, sweet Lady, you were not his Daugh-  
 ter —

Pity me, I am haunted; — thrice this day  
 My conscience made me wish to be struck  
 blind;

And then I would have prayed, and had no  
 voice.

*Idon.* (*to Marmaduke*). Was it my Fa-  
 ther? — no, no, no, for he

Was meek and patient, feeble, old and blind,  
 Helpless, and loved me dearer than his life.  
 — But hear me. For one question, I have  
 a heart

That will sustain me. Did you murder him?

*Mar.* No, not by stroke of arm. But  
 learn the process: 240

Proof after proof was pressed upon me;  
 guilt

Made evident, as seemed, by blacker guilt,  
 Whose impious folds enwrapped even thee;  
 and truth

And innocence, embodied in his looks,  
 His words and tones and gestures, did but  
 serve

With me to aggravate his crimes, and  
 heaped

Ruin upon the cause for which they pleaded.

Then pity crossed the path of my resolve:  
Confounded, I looked up to Heaven, and  
cast,

Idonea ! thy blind Father, on the Ordeal <sup>250</sup>  
Of the bleak Waste — left him — and so he  
died ! —

[Idonea sinks senseless ; Beggar, Elea-  
nor, etc., crowd round, and bear her off.]

Why may we speak these things, and do no  
more ;

Why should a thrust of the arm have such  
a power,

And words that tell these things be heard  
in vain ?

She is not dead. Why ! — if I loved this  
Woman,

I would take care she never woke again ;  
But she WILL wake, and she will weep for  
me,

And say, no blame was mine — and so, poor  
fool,

Will waste her curses on another name.

[He walks about distractedly.]

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. (to himself). Strong to o'erturn,  
strong also to build up. <sup>260</sup>

[To Marmaduke.]

The starts and sallies of our last encounter  
Were natural enough ; but that, I trust,  
Is all gone by. You have cast off the  
chains

That fettered your nobility of mind —  
Delivered heart and head !

Let us to Palestine ;  
This is a paltry field for enterprise.

Mar. Ay, what shall we encounter next ?  
This issue —

'T was nothing more than darkness deepening  
darkness,

And weakness crowned with the impotence  
of death ! —

Your pupil is, you see, an apt proficient.  
(Ironically.) <sup>270</sup>

Start not ! — Here is another face hard by ;  
Come, let us take a peep at both together,  
And, with a voice at which the dead will  
quake,

Resound the praise of your morality —  
Of this too much.

[Drawing Oswald towards the Cottage  
— stops short at the door.]

Men are there, millions, Oswald,  
Who with bare hands would have plucked  
out thy heart

And flung it to the dogs : but I am raised  
Above, or sunk below, all further sense  
Of provocation. Leave me, with the weight  
Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy  
heart, <sup>280</sup>

Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.

Coward I have been ; know, there lies not  
now

Within the compass of a mortal thought,  
A deed that I would shrink from ; — but to  
endure,

That is my destiny. May it be thine :

Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth  
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting  
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.

When seas and continents shall lie between  
us —

The wider space the better — we may  
find <sup>290</sup>

In such a course fit links of sympathy,

An incommunicable rivalry

Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond our  
view.

[Confused voices — several of the band  
enter — rush upon Oswald, and seize  
him.]

One of them. I would have dogged him  
to the jaws of hell —

Osw. Ha ! is it so ! — That vagrant Hag !  
— this comes

Of having left a thing like her alive !

[Aside.]

Several voices. Despatch him !

Osw. If I pass beneath a rock  
And shout, and, with the echo of my voice,  
Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it crush  
me, <sup>299</sup>

I die without dishonour. Famished, starved,  
A Fool and Coward blended to my wish !

[Smiles scornfully and exultingly at  
Marmaduke.]

Wal. 'T is done ! (Stabs him).

Another of the Band. The ruthless  
Traitor !

Mar. A rash deed ! —

With that reproof I do resign a station  
Of which I have been proud.

Wil. (approaching Marmaduke). O my  
poor Master !

Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faithful  
Wilfred,

Why art thou here ? [Turning to Wallace.]

Wallace, upon these Borders,  
Many there be whose eyes will not want  
cause

To weep that I am gone. Brothers in  
arms!  
Raise on that dreary Waste a monument  
That may record my story: nor let words —  
Few must they be, and delicate in their  
touch<sup>311</sup>  
As light itself — be these withheld from  
Her  
Who, through most wicked arts, was made  
an orphan  
By One who would have died a thousand  
times,  
To shield her from a moment's harm. To  
you,  
Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the Lady,  
By lowly nature reared, as if to make  
her  
In all things worthier of that noble birth,  
Whose long-suspended rights are now on  
the eve<sup>319</sup>  
Of restoration: with your tenderest care  
Watch over her, I pray — sustain her —  
*Several of the Band (eagerly). Captain!*

*Mar.* No more of that; in silence hear  
my doom:  
A hermitage has furnished fit relief  
To some offenders: other penitents,  
Less patient in their wretchedness, have  
fallen,  
Like the old Roman, on their own sword's  
point.  
They had their choice: a wanderer *must I go*,  
The Spectre of that innocent Man, my  
guide.  
No human ear shall ever hear me speak;  
No human dwelling ever give me food,<sup>330</sup>  
Or sleep, or rest: but, over waste and  
wild,  
In search of nothing, that this earth can  
give,  
But expiation, will I wander on —  
A Man by pain and thought compelled to  
live,  
Yet loathing life — till anger is appeased  
In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to  
die.

## THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

1797. 1800

This arose out of my observation of the af-  
fecting music of these birds hanging in this  
way in the London streets during the freshness  
and stillness of the Spring morning.

At the corner of Wood Street, when day-  
light appears,  
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has  
sung for three years:  
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has  
heard  
In the silence of morning the song of the  
Bird.

'T is a note of enchantment; what ails her?  
She sees

A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;  
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury  
glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of  
Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of  
the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with  
her pail;

And a single small cottage, a nest like a  
dove's,  
The one only dwelling on earth that she  
loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but  
they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the  
shade:  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will  
not rise,  
And the colours have all passed away from  
her eyes!

## THE BIRTH OF LOVE

1797. 1842

Translated from some French stanzas by  
Francis Wrangham, and printed in "Poems by  
Francis Wrangham, M. A."

WHEN Love was born of heavenly line,  
What dire intrigues disturbed Cythera's  
joy!  
Till Venus cried, "A mother's heart is  
mine;  
None but myself shall nurse my boy."

But, infant as he was, the child  
 In that divine embrace enchanted lay;  
 And, by the beauty of the vase beguiled,  
 Forgot the beverage — and pined away.

“And must my offspring languish in my  
 sight?”

(Alive to all a mother's pain, 10  
 The Queen of Beauty thus her court  
 addressed)

“No: Let the most discreet of all my train  
 Receive him to her breast:  
 Think all, he is the God of young delight.”

Then TENDERNESS with CANDOUR joined,  
 And GAIETY the charming office sought;  
 Nor even DELICACY stayed behind:

But none of those fair Graces brought  
 Wherewith to nurse the child — and still  
 he pined.

Some fond hearts to COMPLIANCE seemed  
 inclined; 20

But she had surely spoiled the boy:  
 And sad experience forbade a thought  
 On the wild Goddess of VOLUPTUOUS JOY.

Long undecided lay th' important choice,  
 Till of the beauteous court, at length, a voice  
 Pronounced the name of HOPE: — The  
 conscious child  
 Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.

'Tis said ENJOYMENT (who averred  
 The charge belonged to her alone)  
 Jealous that HOPE had been preferred 30  
 Laid snares to make the babe her own.

Of INNOCENCE the garb she took,  
 The blushing uien and downcast look;  
 And came her services to proffer:  
 And HOPE (what has not HOPE believed!)  
 By that seducing air deceived,  
 Accepted of the offer.

It happened that, to sleep inclined,  
 Deluded HOPE for one short hour  
 To that false INNOCENCE's power 40  
 Her little charge consigned.

The Goddess then her lap with sweetmeats  
 filled

And gave, in handfuls gave, the treacher-  
 ous store:

A wild delirium first the infant thrilled;  
 But soon upon her breast he sunk — to  
 wake no more.

## A NIGHT-PIECE

1798. 1815

Composed on the road between Nethes  
 Stowey and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly  
 recollect the very moment when I was struck,  
 as described, — “He looks up — the clouds are  
 split,” etc.

— THE sky is overcast  
 With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
 Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,  
 Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,  
 A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
 So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,  
 Chequering the ground — from rock, plant,  
 tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
 Startles the pensive traveller while he  
 treads

His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
 Bent earthwards; he looks up — the clouds  
 are split

Asunder, — and above his head he sees  
 The clear Moon, and the glory of the hea-  
 vens.

There, in a black-blue vault she sails along,  
 Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small  
 And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss  
 Drive as she drives: how fast they wheel  
 away,

Yet vanish not! — the wind is in the tree,  
 But they are silent; — still they roll along  
 Immeasurably distant; and the vault,  
 Built round by those white clouds, enor-  
 mous clouds,

Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
 At length the Vision closes; and the mind,  
 Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
 Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
 Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

## WE ARE SEVEN

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798,  
 under circumstances somewhat remarkable.  
 The little girl who is the heroine I met within  
 the area of Goodrich Castle in the year 1793.  
 Having left the Isle of Wight and crossed  
 Salisbury Plain, as mentioned in the preface to  
 “Guilt and Sorrow,” I proceeded by Bristol up  
 the Wye, and so on to North Wales, to the  
 Vale of Clwydd, where I spent my summer

under the roof of the father of my friend, Robert Jones. In reference to this Poem I will here mention one of the most remarkable facts in my own poetic history and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the spring of the year 1798, he, my Sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden, pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Lenton and the valley of Stones near it; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aikin. Accordingly we set off and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the "Ancient Mariner," founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend, Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention; but certain parts I myself suggested:—for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime, and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvoek's Voyages a day or two before that while doubling Cape Horn they frequently saw Albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or fifteen feet. "Suppose," said I, "you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary Spirits of those regions take upon them to avenge the crime." The incident was thought fit for the purpose and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The Gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time; at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous after-thought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular:—

"And listened like a three years' child;  
The Mariner had his will."

These trifling contributions, all but one (which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded) slipped out of his mind as they well might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a

delightful tour, of which I have many pleasant, and some of them dull-enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The "Ancient Mariner" grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds, and we began to talk of a Volume, which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium. Accordingly I wrote "The Idiot Boy," "Her eyes are wild," etc., "We are seven," "The Thorn," and some others. To return to "We are seven," the piece that called forth this note, I composed it while walking in the grove at Alfoxden. My friends will not deem it too trifling to relate that while walking to and fro I composed the last stanza first, having begun with the last line. When it was all but finished, I came in and recited it to Mr. Coleridge and my Sister, and said, "A prefatory stanza must be added, and I should sit down to our little tea-meal with greater pleasure if my task were finished." I mentioned in substance what I wished to be expressed, and Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza thus:—

"A little child, dear brother Jem,"—

I objected to the rhyme, "dear brother Jem," as being ludicrous, but we all enjoyed the joke of hitching-in our friend, James T——'s name, who was familiarly called Jem. He was the brother of the dramatist, and this reminds me of an anecdote which it may be worth while here to notice. The said Jem got a sight of the Lyrical Ballads as it was going through the press at Bristol, during which time I was residing in that city. One evening he came to me with a grave face, and said, "Wordsworth, I have seen the volume that Coleridge and you are about to publish. There is one poem in it which I earnestly entreat you will cancel, for, if published, it will make you everlastingly ridiculous." I answered that I felt much obliged by the interest he took in my good name as a writer, and begged to know what was the unfortunate piece he alluded to. He said, "It is called 'We are seven.'" Nay! said I, that shall take its chance, however, and he left me in despair. I have only to add that in the spring of 1841 I revisited Goodrich Castle, not having seen that part of the Wye since I met the little Girl there in 1793. It would have given me greater pleasure to have found in the neighbouring hamlet traces of one who had interested me so much; but that was impossible, as unfortunately I did not even know her name. The ruin, from its position and fea-

tures, is a most impressive object. I could not but deeply regret that its solemnity was impaired by a fantastic new Castle set up on a projection of the same ridge, as if to show how far modern art can go in surpassing all that could be done by antiquity and nature with their united graces, remembrances, and associations.

A SIMPLE Child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad:  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;  
— Her beauty made me glad.

‘Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?’  
“How many? Seven in all,” she said  
And wondering looked at me.

“And where are they? I pray you tell.”  
She answered, “Seven are we;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;  
And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven! — I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be.”

Then did the little Maid reply,  
“Seven boys and girls are we;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree.”

“You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive;  
If two are in the church-yard laid,  
Then ye are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”  
The little Maid replied,

“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s  
door,  
And they are side by side.

“My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

“And often after sunset, Sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was sister Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain;  
And then she went away.

“So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And, when the grass was dry,  
Together round her grave we played,  
My brother John and I.

“And when the ground was white with  
snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side.”

“How many are you, then,” said I,  
“If they two are in heaven?”  
Quick was the little Maid’s reply,  
“O Master! we are seven.”

“But they are dead; those two are dead!  
Their spirits are in heaven!”  
’T was throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, “Nay, we are seven!”

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS

1798. 1798

“Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges.” —  
EUSEBIUS.

This was suggested in front of Alfoxden. The Boy was a son of my friend, Basil Montagu, who had been two or three years under our care. The name of Kilve is from a village on the Bristol Channel, about a mile from Alfoxden; and the name of Liswyn Farm was taken from a beautiful spot on the Wye. When Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and I, had

been visiting the famous John Thelwall, who had taken refuge from politics, after a trial for high treason, with a view to bring up his family by the profits of agriculture, which proved as unfortunate a speculation as that he had fled from, Coleridge and he had both been public lecturers; Coleridge mingling, with his politics, Theology, from which the other elocutionist abstained, unless it were for the sake of a sneer. This quondam community of public employment induced Thelwall to visit Coleridge at Nether Stowey, where he fell in my way. He really was a man of extraordinary talent, an affectionate husband, and a good father. Though brought up in the City, he was truly sensible of the beauty of natural objects. I remember once, when Coleridge, he, and I were seated together upon the turf on the brink of a stream in the most beautiful part of the most beautiful glen of Alfoxden, Coleridge exclaimed, "This is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world." — "Nay," said Thelwall, "to make one forget them altogether." The visit of this man to Coleridge was, as I believe Coleridge has related, the occasion of a spy being sent by Government to watch our proceedings, which were, I can say with truth, such as the world at large would have thought ludicrously harmless.

I HAVE a boy of five years old;  
His face is fair and fresh to see;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,  
Our quiet home all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore, 10  
Our pleasant home when spring began,  
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
Some fond regrets to entertain;  
With so much happiness to spare,  
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet  
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,  
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet  
From sunshine back to shade. 20

Birds warbled round me — and each trace  
Of inward sadness had its charm;

Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,  
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim  
And graceful in his rustic dress!  
And, as we talked, I questioned him,  
In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"  
I said, and took him by the arm, 30  
"On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green sea,  
Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be  
Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so:  
My little Edward, tell me why." —  
"I cannot tell, I do not know." —  
"Why, this is strange," said I; 40

"For, here are woods, hills smooth and  
warm:  
There surely must some reason be  
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy hung down his head,  
He blushed with shame, nor made reply;  
And three times to the child I said,  
"Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised — there was in sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain — 50  
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And eased his mind with this reply:  
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock;  
And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn. 60

## THE THORN

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. Arose out of my observing, on the ridge of Quantock Hill, on a

stormy day, a thorn which I had often past, in calm and bright weather, without noticing it. I said to myself, "Cannot I by some invention do as much to make this Thorn permanently an impressive object as the storm has made it to my eyes at this moment?" I began the poem accordingly, and composed it with great rapidity. Sir George Beaumont painted a picture from it which Wilkie thought his best. He gave it me; though when he saw it several times at Rydal Mount afterwards, he said, "I could make a better, and would like to paint the same subject over again." The sky in this picture is nobly done, but it reminds one too much of Wilson. The only fault, however, of any consequence is the female figure, which is too old and decrepit for one likely to frequent an eminence on such a call.

## I

"THERE is a Thorn — it looks so old,  
In truth, you'd find it hard to say  
How it could ever have been young,  
It looks so old and grey.  
Not higher than a two years' child  
It stands erect, this aged Thorn;  
No leaves it has, no prickly points;  
It is a mass of knotted joints,  
A wretched thing forlorn.  
It stands erect, and like a stone  
With lichens is it overgrown.

## II

"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,  
With lichens to the very top,  
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
A melancholy crop:  
Up from the earth these mosses creep,  
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round  
So close, you'd say that they are bent  
With plain and manifest intent  
To drag it to the ground;  
And all have joined in one endeavour  
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

## III

"High on a mountain's highest ridge,  
Where oft the stormy winter gale  
Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds  
It sweeps from vale to vale;  
Not five yards from the mountain path,  
This Thorn you on your left espy;  
And to the left, three yards beyond,  
You see a little muddy pond  
Of water — never dry  
Though but of compass small, and bare  
To thirsty suns and parching air.

## IV

"And, close beside this aged Thorn,  
There is a fresh and lovely sight,  
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,  
Just half a foot in height.  
All lovely colours there you see,  
All colours that were ever seen;  
And mossy network too is there,  
As if by hand of lady fair  
The work had woven been;  
And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
So deep is their vermilion dye.

## V

"Ah me! what lovely tints are there  
Of olive green and scarlet bright,  
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
Green, red, and pearly white!  
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,  
Which close beside the Thorn you see,  
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
Is like an infant's grave in size,  
As like as like can be:  
But never, never any where,  
An infant's grave was half so fair.

## VI

"Now would you see this aged Thorn,  
This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,  
You must take care and choose your time  
The mountain when to cross.  
For oft there sits between the heap  
So like an infant's grave in size,  
And that same pond of which I spoke,  
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'

## VII

"At all times of the day and night  
This wretched Woman thither goes;  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows;  
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits  
When the blue daylight's in the skies  
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'

## VIII

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,  
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,



Thus to the dreary mountain-top  
Does this poor Woman go ?  
And why sits she beside the Thorn  
When the blue daylight 's in the sky,  
Or when the whirlwind 's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And wherefore does she cry ? —  
O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why  
Does she repeat that doleful cry ?”

## IX

“I cannot tell; I wish I could;  
For the true reason no one knows:  
But would you gladly view the spot,  
The spot to which she goes;  
The hillock like an infant's grave,  
The pond — and Thorn, so old and grey;  
Pass by her door — 't is seldom shut —  
And, if you see her in her hut —  
Then to the spot away !  
I never heard of such as dare  
Approach the spot when she is there.”

## X

“But wherefore to the mountain-top  
Can this unhappy Woman go ?  
Whatever star is in the skies,  
Whatever wind may blow ?”  
“Full twenty years are past and gone  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave with a maiden's true good-will  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
While friends and kindred all approved  
Of him whom tenderly she loved.”

## XI

“And they had fixed the wedding day,  
The morning that must wed them both;  
But Stephen to another Maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And, with this other Maid, to church  
Unthinking Stephen went —  
Poor Martha ! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent;  
A fire was kindled in her breast,  
Which might not burn itself to rest.”

## XII

“They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
What could she seek ? — or wish to hide ?

80

Her state to any eye was plain ;  
She was with child, and she was mad ;  
Yet often was she sober sad  
From her exceeding pain. 130  
O guilty Father — would that death  
Had saved him from that breach of faith !

## XIII

“Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child !  
Sad case, as you may think, for one  
Who had a brain so wild !  
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,  
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen  
Held that the unborn infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought 140  
Her senses back again:  
And, when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

## XIV

“More know I not, I wish I did,  
And it should all be told to you;  
For what became of this poor child  
No mortal ever knew;  
Nay — if a child to her was born  
No earthly tongue could ever tell;  
And if 't was born alive or dead, 150  
Far less could this with proof be said;  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb.

## XV

“And all that winter, when at night  
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,  
'T was worth your while, though in the dark,  
The churchyard path to seek !  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain head: 160  
Some plainly living voices were;  
And others, I've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead:  
I cannot think, whate'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray.

## XVI

“But that she goes to this old Thorn,  
The Thorn which I described to you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak  
I will be sworn is true.  
For one day with my telescope, 170  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,

I climbed the mountain's height: —  
A storm came on, and I could see  
No object higher than my knee.

## XVII

"Twas mist and rain, and storm and  
rain:

No screen, no fence could I discover;  
And then the wind! in sooth, it was  
A wind full ten times over. 180  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag, — and off I ran,  
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain;  
And, as I am a man,  
Instead of jutting crag, I found  
A Woman seated on the ground.

## XVIII

"I did not speak — I saw her face;  
Her face! — it was enough for me;  
I turned about and heard her cry, 190  
'Oh misery! oh misery!'  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will go;  
And, when the little breezes make  
The waters of the pond to shake,  
As all the country know,  
She shudders, and you hear her cry,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!'"

## XIX

"But what's the Thorn? and what the  
pond?  
And what the hill of moss to her? 200  
And what the creeping breeze that comes  
The little pond to stir?"  
"I cannot tell; but some will say  
She hanged her baby on the tree;  
Some say she drowned it in the pond,  
Which is a little step beyond:  
But all and each agree,  
The little Babe was buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XX

"I've heard, the moss is spotted red 210  
With drops of that poor infant's blood;  
But kill a new-born infant thus,  
I do not think she could!  
Some say, if to the pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view,  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you;

Whene'er you look on it, 't is plain  
The baby looks at you again.

## XXI

"And some had sworn an oath that she  
Should be to public justice brought;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have sought.  
But instantly the hill of moss  
Before their eyes began to stir!  
And, for full fifty yards around,  
The grass — it shook upon the ground!  
Yet all do still aver  
The little Babe lies buried there, 230  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XXII

"I cannot tell how this may be,  
But plain it is the Thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss that strive  
To drag it to the ground;  
And this I know, full many a time,  
When she was on the mountain high,  
By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and bright,  
That I have heard her cry, 240  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'"

## GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL

## A TRUE STORY

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. The incident from  
Dr. Darwin's *Zoönomia*.

OH! what's the matter? what's the matter?  
What is 't that ails young Harry Gill?  
That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,  
Good duffle grey, and flannel fine;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
'T is all the same with Harry Gill; 10  
The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
At night, at morning, and at noon,  
'T is all the same with Harry Gill;  
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
 And who so stout of limb as he ?  
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;  
 His voice was like the voice of three. 20  
 Old Goody Blake was old and poor;  
 Ill fed she was, and thinly clad;  
 And any man who passed her door  
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling:  
 And then her three hours' work at night,  
 Alas ! 't was hardly worth the telling,  
 It would not pay for candle-light.  
 Remote from sheltered village-green,  
 On a hill's northern side she dwelt, 30  
 Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns  
 lean,  
 And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
 Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
 Will often live in one small cottage;  
 But she, poor Woman ! housed alone.  
 'T was well enough when summer came,  
 The long, warm, lightsoine summer-day,  
 Then at her door the *canty* Dame  
 Would sit, as any linnet, gay. 40

But when the ice our streams did fet-  
 ter,  
 Oh then how her old bones would shake !  
 You would have said, if you had met her,  
 'T was a hard time for Goody Blake.  
 Her evenings then were dull and dead:  
 Sad case it was, as you may think,  
 For very cold to go to bed,  
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her ! when'er in winter  
 The winds at night had made a rout; 50  
 And scattered many a lusty splinter  
 And many a rotten bough about.  
 Yet never had she, well or sick,  
 As every man who knew her says,  
 A pile beforehand, turf or stick,  
 Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
 And made her poor old bones to ache,  
 Could any thing be more alluring  
 Than an old hedge to Goody Blake ? 60  
 And, now and then, it must be said,  
 When her old bones were cold and chill,  
 She left her fire, or left her bed,  
 To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected  
 This trespass of old Goody Blake;  
 And vowed that she should be detected —  
 That he on her would vengeance take.  
 And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
 And to the fields his road would take; 70  
 And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
 He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
 Thus looking out did Harry stand:  
 The moon was full and shining clearly,  
 And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
 — He hears a noise — he's all awake —  
 Again ? — on tip-toe down the hill  
 He softly creeps — 't is Goody Blake;  
 She's at the hedge of Harry Gill ! 80

Right glad was he when he beheld her:  
 Stick after stick did Goody pull:  
 He stood behind a bush of elder,  
 Till she had filled her apron full.  
 When with her load she turned about,  
 The by-way back again to take;  
 He started forward, with a shout,  
 And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
 And by the arm he held her fast, 90  
 And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
 And cried, "I've caught you then at  
 last !" —

Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
 And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed  
 To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
 While Harry held her by the arm —  
 "God ! who art never out of hearing,  
 O may he never more be warm !" 100  
 The cold, cold moon above her head,  
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray;  
 Young Harry heard what she had said:  
 And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow  
 That he was cold and very chill:  
 His face was gloom, his heart was sor-  
 row,  
 Alas ! that day for Harry Gill !  
 That day he wore a riding-coat,  
 But not a whit the warmer he: 110  
 Another was on Thursday brought,  
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'T was all in vain, a useless matter,  
And blankets were about him pinned;  
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter;  
Like a loose casement in the wind.  
And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
And all who see him say, 't is plain,  
That, live as long as live he may,  
He never will be warm again.

120

No word to any man he utters,  
A-bed or up, to young or old;  
But ever to himself he mutters,  
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
A-bed or up, by night or day;  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

## HER EYES ARE WILD

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. The subject was reported to me by a lady of Bristol, who had seen the poor creature.

I

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
The sun has burnt her coal-black hair;  
Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,  
And she came far from over the main.  
She has a baby on her arm,  
Or else she were alone:  
And underneath the hay-stack warm,  
And on the greenwood stone,  
She talked and sung the woods among,  
And it was in the English tongue.

10

II

"Sweet babe! they say that I am mad,  
But nay, my heart is far too glad;  
And I am happy when I sing  
Full many a sad and doleful thing:  
Then, lovely baby, do not fear!  
I pray thee have no fear of me;  
But safe as in a cradle, here,  
My lovely baby! thou shalt be:  
To thee I know too much I owe;  
I cannot work thee any weoe.

20

III

"A fire was once within my brain;  
And in my head a dull, dull pain;  
And fiendish faces, one, two, three,  
Hung at my breast, and pulled at me;

But then there came a sight of joy;  
It came at once to do me good;  
I waked, and saw my little boy,  
My little boy of flesh and blood;  
Oh joy for me that sight to see!  
For he was here, and only he.

30

IV

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!  
It cools my blood; it cools my brain;  
Thy lips I feel them, baby! they  
Draw from my heart the pain away.  
Oh! press me with thy little hand;  
It loosens something at my chest;  
About that tight and deadly band  
I feel thy little fingers prest.  
The breeze I see is in the tree:  
It comes to cool my babe and me.

40

V

"Oh! love me, love me, little boy!  
Thou art thy mother's only joy;  
And do not dread the waves below,  
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go;  
The high crag cannot work me harm,  
Nor leaping torrents when they howl;  
The babe I carry on my arm,  
He saves for me my precious soul;  
Then happy lie; for blest am I;  
Without me my sweet babe would die.

50

VI

"Then do not fear, my boy! for thee  
Bold as a lion will I be;  
And I will always be thy guide,  
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.  
I'll build an Indian bower; I know  
The leaves that make the softest bed:  
And, if from me thou wilt not go,  
But still be true till I am dead,  
My pretty thing! then thou shalt sing  
As merry as the birds in spring.

60

VII

"Thy father cares not for my breast,  
'T is thine, sweet baby, there to rest;  
'T is all thine own!—and, if its hue  
Be changed, that was so fair to view,  
'T is fair enough for thee, my dove!  
My beauty, little child, is flown,  
But thou wilt live with me in love,  
And what if my poor cheek be brown?  
'T is well for me, thou canst not see  
How pale and wan it else would be.

70

## VIII

"Dread not their taunts, my little Life;  
I am thy father's wedded wife;  
And underneath the spreading tree  
We two will live in honesty.  
If his sweet boy he could forsake,  
With me he never would have stayed:  
From him no harm my babe can take;  
But he, poor man! is wretched made;  
And every day we two will pray  
For him that's gone and far away." 80

## IX

"I'll teach my boy the sweetest things:  
I'll teach him how the owlet sings.  
My little babe! thy lips are still,  
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.  
— Where art thou gone, my own dear  
child?  
What wicked looks are those I see?  
Alas! alas! that look so wild,  
It never, never came from me:  
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
Then I must be for ever sad." 90

## X

"Oh! smile on me, my little lamb!  
For I thy own dear mother am:  
My love for thee has well been tried:  
I've sought thy father far and wide.  
I know the poisons of the shade;  
I know the earth-nuts fit for food:  
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid:  
We'll find thy father in the wood.  
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away!  
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye." 100

## SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN;  
WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS  
CONCERNED

1798. 1798

This old man had been huntsman to the squires of Alfoxden, which, at the time we occupied it, belonged to a minor. The old man's cottage stood upon the common, a little way from the entrance to Alfoxden Park. But it had disappeared. Many other changes had taken place in the adjoining village, which I could not but notice with a regret more natural than well-considered. Improvements but rarely appear such to those who, after long intervals of time, revisit places they have had much pleasure

in. It is unnecessary to add, the fact was as mentioned in the poem; and I have, after an interval of forty-five years, the image of the old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expression when the hounds were out, "I dearly love their voice," was word for word from his own lips.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,  
An old Man dwells, a little man, —  
'Tis said he once was tall.  
Full five-and-thirty years he lived  
A running huntsman merry;  
And still the centre of his cheek  
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
And hill and valley rang with glee 10  
When Echo banded, round and round,  
The halloo of Simon Lee.  
In those proud days, he little cared  
For husbandry or tillage;  
To blither tasks did Simon rouse  
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse behind;  
And often, ere the chase was done,  
He reeled, and was stone-blind. 20  
And still there's something in the world  
At which his heart rejoices;  
For when the chiming hounds are out,  
He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change! — bereft  
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,  
see!

Old Simon to the world is left  
In liveried poverty.  
His Master's dead, — and no one now  
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor; 30  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;  
His body, dwindled and awry,  
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;  
His legs are thin and dry.  
One prop he has, and only one,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village Common. 40

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door,

A scrap of land they have, but they  
 Are poorest of the poor.  
 This scrap of land he from the heath  
 Enclosed when he was stronger;  
 But what to them avails the land  
 Which he can till no longer ?

Off, working by her Husband's side,  
 Ruth does what Simon cannot do;  
 For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
 Is stouter of the two.  
 And, though you with your utmost skill  
 From labour could not wean them,  
 'T is little, very little — all  
 That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
 As he to you will tell,  
 For still, the more he works, the more  
 Do his weak ankles swell.  
 My gentle Reader, I perceive  
 How patiently you 've waited,  
 And now I fear that you expect  
 Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind  
 Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
 O gentle Reader ! you would find  
 A tale in every thing.  
 What more I have to say is short,  
 And you must kindly take it:  
 It is no tale; but, should you think,  
 Perhaps a tale you 'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
 This old Man doing all he could  
 To unearth the root of an old tree,  
 A stump of rotten wood.  
 The mattock tottered in his hand;  
 So vain was his endeavour,  
 That at the root of the old tree  
 He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,  
 Give me your tool," to him I said;  
 And at the word right gladly he  
 Received my proffered aid.  
 I struck, and with a single blow  
 The tangled root I severed,  
 At which the poor old Man so long  
 And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,  
 And thanks and praises seemed to run

So fast out of his heart, I thought  
 They never would have done.  
 — I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
 With coldness still returning;  
 Alas ! the gratitude of mere  
 Hath oftener left me mourning.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY  
 SPRING

1798. 1798

Actually composed while I was sitting by the  
 side of the brook that runs down from the  
 Comb, in which stands the village of Alford,  
 through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a  
 chosen resort of mine. The brook fell down a  
 sloping rock so as to make a waterfall consid-  
 erable for that country, and across the pool be-  
 low had fallen a tree, an ash if I rightly remem-  
 ber, from which rose perpendicularly, boughs in  
 search of the light intercepted by the deep  
 shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green  
 that for want of sunshine had faded into almost  
 lily-white; and from the underside of this  
 natural sylvan bridge depended long and beau-  
 tiful tresses of ivy which waved gently in the  
 breeze that might poetically speaking be called  
 the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied  
 of course in proportion to the power of water in  
 the brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited  
 this spot, after an interval of more than forty  
 years, this interesting feature of the scene was  
 gone. To the owner of the place I could not  
 but regret that the beauty of this retired part  
 of the grounds had not tempted him to make it  
 more accessible by a path, not broad or obtru-  
 sive, but sufficient for persons who love such  
 scenes to creep along without difficulty.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
 While in a grove I sat reclined,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
 The human soul that through me ran;  
 And much it grieved my heart to think  
 What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green  
 bower,  
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
 And 't is my faith that every flower  
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
 Their thoughts I cannot measure: —

But the least motion which they made  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man ?

### TO MY SISTER

1798. 1798

Composed in front of Alfoxden House. My little boy-messenger on this occasion was the son of Basil Montagu. The larch mentioned in the first stanza was standing when I revisited the place in May, 1841, more than forty years after. I was disappointed that it had not improved in appearance as to size, nor had it acquired anything of the majesty of age, which, even though less perhaps than any other tree, the larch sometimes does. A few score yards from this tree, grew, when we inhabited Alfoxden, one of the most remarkable beech-trees ever seen. The ground sloped both towards and from it. It was of immense size, and threw out arms that struck into the soil, like those of the banyan-tree, and rose again from it. Two of the branches thus inserted themselves twice, which gave to each the appearance of a serpent moving along by gathering itself up in folds. One of the large boughs of this tree had been torn off by the wind before we left Alfoxden, but five remained. In 1841 we could barely find the spot where the tree had stood. So remarkable a production of nature could not have been wilfully destroyed.

It is the first mild day of March:  
Each minute sweeter than before  
The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('t is a wish of mine)  
Now that our morning meal is done, 10  
Make haste, your morning task resign;  
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you; — and, pray,  
Put on with speed your woodland dress;  
And bring no book: for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate  
Our living calendar:  
We from to-day, my Friend, will date  
The opening of the year. 20

Love, now a universal birth,  
From heart to heart is stealing,  
From earth to man, from man to earth:  
— It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more  
Than years of toiling reason:  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,  
Which they shall long obey: 30  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls  
About, below, above,  
We'll frame the measure of our souls:  
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,  
With speed put on your woodland dress;  
And bring no book: for this one day  
We'll give to idleness. 40

### "A WHIRL-BLAST FROM BEHIND THE HILL"

1798. 1800

Observed in the holly-grove at Alfoxden, where these verses were written in the spring of 1799. I had the pleasure of again seeing, with dear friends, this grove in unimpaired beauty forty-one years after.

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound;  
Then — all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered round.  
Where leafless oaks towered high above,  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er,

And all the year the bower is green.  
 But see ! where'er the hailstones drop  
 The withered leaves all skip and hop;  
 There's not a breeze — no breath of air —  
 Yet here, and there, and everywhere  
 Along the floor, beneath the shade  
 By those embowering hollies made,  
 The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
 As if with pipes and music rare  
 Some Robin Good-fellow were there,  
 And all those leaves, in festive glee,  
 Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

## EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

1798. 1798

This poem is a favourite among the Quakers,  
 as I have learnt on many occasions. It was  
 composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in  
 the spring of 1798.

"WRY, William, on that old grey stone,  
 Thus for the length of half a day,  
 Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
 And dream your time away ?

"Where are your books ? — that light be-  
 queathed  
 To Beings else forlorn and blind !  
 Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed  
 From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
 As if she for no purpose bore you;  
 As if you were her first-born birth,  
 And none had lived before you !"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
 When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
 To me my good friend Matthew spake,  
 And thus I made reply:

"The eye — it cannot choose but see;  
 We cannot bid the ear be still;  
 Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
 Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
 Which of themselves our minds impress;  
 That we can feed this mind of ours  
 In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
 Of things for ever speaking,

That nothing of itself will come,  
 But we must still be seeking ?

" — Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
 Conversing as I may,                     30  
 I sit upon this old grey stone,  
 And dream my time away."

## THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME  
 SUBJECT

1798. 1798

UP ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books;  
 Or surely you'll grow double:  
 Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your looks;  
 Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
 A freshening lustre mellow  
 Through all the long green fields has  
 spread,  
 His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 't is a dull and endless strife:  
 Come, hear the woodland linnnet,                     11  
 How sweet his music ! on my life,  
 There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !  
 He, too, is no mean preacher:  
 Come forth into the light of things,  
 Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
 Our minds and hearts to bless —  
 Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
 Truth breathed by cheerfulness.                     21

One impulse from a vernal wood  
 May teach you more of man,  
 Of moral evil and of good,  
 Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;  
 Our meddling intellect  
 Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things: —  
 We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
 Close up those barren leaves;  
 Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
 That watches and receives.                     30



## THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN

c.1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden, where I read Hearne's *Journey* with deep interest. It was composed for the volume of *Lyrical Ballads*.

When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work HEARNE'S *Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.

## I

BEFORE I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away !  
In sleep I heard the northern gleams;  
The stars, they were among my dreams;  
In rustling conflict through the skies,  
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,  
And yet they are upon my eyes,  
And yet I am alive;  
Before I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away ! 10

## II

My fire is dead: it knew no pain;  
Yet is it dead, and I remain:  
All stiff with ice the ashes lie;  
And they are dead, and I will die.  
When I was well, I wished to live,  
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire;  
But they to me no joy can give,  
No pleasure now, and no desire.  
Then here contented will I lie !  
Alone, I cannot fear to die. 20

## III

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on  
Another day, a single one !  
Too soon I yielded to despair;  
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?

When ye were gone my limbs were stronger;  
And oh, how grievously I rue,  
That, afterwards, a little longer,  
My friends, I did not follow you !  
For strong and without pain I lay,  
Dear friends, when ye were gone away. 30

## IV

My Child ! they gave thee to another,  
A woman who was not thy mother.  
When from my arms my Babe they took,  
On me how strangely did he look !  
Through his whole body something ran,  
A most strange working did I see;  
— As if he strove to be a man,  
That he might pull the sledge for me:  
And then he stretched his arms, how wild !  
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child. 40

## V

My little joy ! my little pride !  
In two days more I must have died.  
Then do not weep and grieve for me;  
I feel I must have died with thee.  
O wind, that o'er my head art flying  
The way my friends their course did  
bend,  
I should not feel the pain of dying,  
Could I with thee a message send;  
Too soon, my friends, ye went away;  
For I had many things to say. 50

## VI

I'll follow you across the snow;  
Ye travel heavily and slow;  
In spite of all my weary pain  
I'll look upon your tents again.  
— My fire is dead, and snowy white  
The water which beside it stood:  
The wolf has come to me to-night,  
And he has stolen away my food.  
For ever left alone am I;  
Then wherefore should I fear to die ? 60

## VII

Young as I am, my course is run,  
I shall not see another sun;  
I cannot lift my limbs to know  
If they have any life or no.  
My poor forsaken Child, if I  
For once could have thee close to me,  
With happy heart I then would die,  
And my last thought would happy be;  
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,  
Nor shall I see another day. 70

## THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

1798. 1798

Produced at the same time and for the same purpose. The incident occurred in the village of Holford, close by Alfoxden.

## I

In distant countries have I been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads, alone.  
But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad highway, I met;  
Along the broad highway he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet:  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;  
And in his arms a Lamb he had.

10

## II

He saw me, and he turned aside,  
As if he wished himself to hide:  
And with his coat did then essay  
To wipe those briny tears away.  
I followed him, and said, "My friend,  
What ails you? wherefore weep you so?"  
—"Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb,  
He makes my tears to flow.  
To-day I fetched him from the rock;  
He is the last of all my flock.

20

## III

"When I was young, a single man,  
And after youthful follies ran,  
Though little given to care and thought,  
Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought;  
And other sheep from her I raised,  
As healthy sheep as you might see;  
And then I married, and was rich  
As I could wish to be;  
Of sheep I numbered a full score,  
And every year increased my store.

30

## IV

"Year after year my stock it grew;  
And from this one, this single ewe,  
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,  
As fine a flock as ever grazed!  
Upon the Quantock hills they fed;  
They throve, and we at home did thrive:  
—This lusty Lamb of all my store  
Is all that is alive;  
And now I care not if we die,  
And perish all of poverty.

40

## V

"Six Children, Sir! had I to feed;  
Hard labour in a time of need!  
My pride was tamed, and in our grief  
I of the Parish asked relief.  
They said, I was a wealthy man;  
My sheep upon the uplands fed,  
And it was fit that thence I took  
Whereof to buy us bread.  
'Do this: how can we give to you,'  
They cried, 'what to the poor is due?' 50

## VI

"I sold a sheep, as they had said,  
And bought my little children bread,  
And they were healthy with their food,  
For me — it never did me good.  
A woeful time it was for me,  
To see the end of all my gains,  
The pretty flock which I had reared  
With all my care and pains,  
To see it melt like snow away —  
For me it was a woeful day. 60

## VII

"Another still! and still another!  
A little lamb, and then its mother!  
It was a vein that never stopped —  
Like blood - drops from my heart they  
dropped.  
'Till thirty were not left alive  
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one,  
And I may say, that many a time  
I wished they all were gone —  
Reckless of what might come at last  
Were but the bitter struggle past. 70

## VIII

"To wicked deeds I was inclined,  
And wicked fancies crossed my mind;  
And every man I chanced to see,  
I thought he knew some ill of me:  
No peace, no comfort could I find,  
No ease, within doors or without;  
And, crazily and wearily  
I went my work about;  
And oft was moved to flee from home, 79  
And hide my head where wild beasts roam.

## IX

"Sir! 't was a precious flock to me  
As dear as my own children be;  
For daily with my growing store  
I loved my children more and more.  
Alas! it was an evil time;

God cursed me in my sore distress;  
I prayed, yet every day I thought  
I loved my children less;  
And every week, and every day,  
My flock it seemed to melt away.

90

x

"They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!  
From ten to five, from five to three,  
A lamb, a wether, and a ewe; —  
And then at last from three to two;  
And, of my fifty, yesterday  
I had but only one:  
And here it lies upon my arm,  
Alas! and I have none; —  
To-day I fetched it from the rock;  
It is the last of all my flock."

100

## THE IDIOT BOY

1798. 1798

The last stanza — "The Cocks did crow to-  
whoo, to-whoo, And the sun did shine so cold"  
— was the foundation of the whole. The words  
were reported to me by my dear friend, Thomas  
Poole; but I have since heard the same repeated  
of other Idiots. Let me add that this long poem  
was composed in the groves of Alfoxden, almost  
extempore; not a word, I believe, being cor-  
rected, though one stanza was omitted. I men-  
tion this in gratitude to those happy moments,  
for, in truth, I never wrote anything with so  
much glee.

'T is eight o'clock, — a clear March night,  
The moon is up, — the sky is blue,  
The owlet, in the moonlight air,  
Shouts from nobody knows where;  
He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
Halloo! halloo! a long halloo!

— Why bustle thus about your door,  
What means this bustle, Betty Foy?  
Why are you in this mighty fret?  
And why on horseback have you set  
Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy?

10

Scarcely a soul is out of bed;  
Good Betty, put him down again;  
His lips with joy they burr at you;  
But, Betty! what has he to do  
With stirrup, saddle, or with rein?

But Betty's bent on her intent;  
For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,

Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
Is sick, and makes a piteous moan  
As if her very life would fail.

20

There's not a house within a mile,  
No hand to help them in distress;  
Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,  
And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,  
Where by the week he doth abide,  
A woodman in the distant vale;  
There's none to help poor Susan Gale;  
What must be done? what will betide?

30

And Betty from the lane has fetched  
Her Pony, that is mild and good;  
Whether he be in joy or pain,  
Feeding at will along the lane,  
Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim, —  
And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
Has on the well-girt saddle set  
(The like was never heard of yet)  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

40

And he must post without delay  
Across the bridge and through the dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,  
There is no need of whip or wand;  
For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
And with a *hurly-burly* now  
He shakes the green bough in his hand.

50

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
The Boy, who is her best delight,  
Both what to follow, what to shun,  
What do, and what to leave undone,  
How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,  
Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that you  
Come home again, nor stop at all, —  
Come home again, whate'er befall,  
My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

60

To this did Johnny answer make,  
Both with his head and with his hand,

And proudly shook the bridle too;  
And then ! his words were not a few,  
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,  
Though Betty 's in a mighty hurry,  
She gently pats the Pony's side,  
On which her Idiot Boy must ride,  
And seems no longer in a hurry.

70

But when the Pony moved his legs,  
Oh ! then for the poor Idiot Boy !  
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,  
For joy his head and heels are idle,  
He 's idle all for very joy.

And while the Pony moves his legs,  
In Johnny's left hand you may see  
The green bough motionless and dead:  
The Moon that shines above his head  
Is not more still and mute than he.

80

His heart it was so full of glee,  
That till full fifty yards were gone,  
He quite forgot his holly whip,  
And all his skill in horsemanship:  
Oh ! happy, happy, happy John.

And while the Mother, at the door,  
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,  
Proud of herself, and proud of him,  
She sees him in his travelling trim,  
How quietly her Johnny goes.

90

The silence of her Idiot Boy,  
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart !  
He 's at the guide-post — he turns right;  
She watches till he 's out of sight,  
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr — now Johnny's lips they burr,  
As loud as any mill, or near it;  
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,  
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,  
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

100

Away she hies to Susan Gale:  
Her Messenger 's in merry tune;  
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,  
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,  
As on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree;  
For of this Pony there 's a rumour,

That, should he lose his eyes and ears,  
And should he live a thousand years,  
He never will be out of humour.

110

But then he is a horse that thinks !  
And when he thinks, his pace is slack;  
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,  
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell  
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,  
And far into the moonlight dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

120

And Betty, now at Susan's side,  
Is in the middle of her story,  
What speedy help her Boy will bring,  
With many a most diverting thing,  
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,  
By this time is not quite so flurried:  
Demure with porringer and plate  
She sits, as if in Susan's fate  
Her life and soul were buried.

130

But Betty, poor good woman ! she,  
You plainly in her face may read it,  
Could lend out of that moment's store  
Five years of happiness or more  
To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then  
With Betty all was not so well;  
And to the road she turns her ears,  
And thence full many a sound she hears,  
Which she to Susan will not tell.

140

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;  
"As sure as there 's a moon in heaven,"  
Cries Betty, "he 'll be back again;  
They 'll both be here — 't is almost ten —  
Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;  
The clock gives warning for eleven;  
"T is on the stroke — "He must be near,"  
Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,  
As sure as there 's a moon in heaven."

150

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,  
And Johnny is not yet in sight:

— The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,  
But Betty is not quite at ease;  
And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,  
On Johnny vile reflections cast:  
"A little idle sauntering Thing!"  
With other names, an endless string; 160  
But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,  
That happy time all past and gone,  
"How can it be he is so late?  
The Doctor, he has made him wait;  
Susan! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,  
And Betty's in a sad *quandary*;  
And then there's nobody to say  
If she must go, or she must stay! 170  
— She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one;  
But neither Doctor nor his Guide  
Appears along the moonlight road;  
There's neither horse nor man abroad,  
And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear  
Of sad mischances not a few:  
That Johnny may perhaps be drowned,  
Or lost, perhaps, and never found; 180  
Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this  
With, "God forbid it should be true!"  
At the first word that Susan said  
Cried Betty, rising from the bed,  
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you."

"I must be gone, I must away:  
Consider, Johnny's but half-wise;  
Susan, we must take care of him,  
If he is hurt in life or limb" — 190  
"Oh God forbid!" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do?" says Betty, going,  
"What can I do to ease your pain?  
Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay;  
I fear you're in a dreadful way,  
But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go! good Betty, go!  
There's nothing that can ease my pain."

Then off she hies; but with a prayer  
That God poor Susan's life would spare, 200  
Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,  
And far into the moonlight dale;  
And how she ran, and how she walked,  
And all that to herself she talked,  
Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,  
In great and small, in round and square,  
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,  
In bush and brake, in black and green; 210  
"T was Johnny, Johnny, every where.

And while she crossed the bridge, there  
came  
A thought with which her heart is sore —  
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,  
To hunt the moon within the brook,  
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,  
Alone amid a prospect wide;  
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse  
Among the fern or in the gorse; 220  
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"O saints! what is become of him?  
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,  
Where he will stay till he is dead;  
Or, sadly he has been misled,  
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

"Or him that wicked Pony's carried  
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall;  
Or in the castle he's pursuing  
Among the ghosts his own undoing; 230  
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,  
While to the town she posts away;  
"If Susan had not been so ill,  
Alas! I should have had him still,  
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,  
The Doctor's self could hardly spare:  
Unworthy things she talked, and wild;  
Even he, of cattle the most mild, 240  
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,  
And to the Doctor's door she hies;

'T is silence all on every side;  
The town so long, the town so wide,  
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,  
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap;  
The Doctor at the casement shows  
His glimmering eyes that peep and doze !  
And one hand rubs his old night-cap. 251

"O Doctor ! Doctor ! where's my  
Johnny ?"

"I'm here, what is 't you want with me ?"  
"O Sir ! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
And I have lost my poor dear Boy,  
You know him — him you often see;

"He's not so wise as some folks be :"  
"The devil take his wisdom !" said  
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,  
"What, Woman ! should I know of him ?"  
And, grumbling, he went back to bed ! 261

"O woe is me ! O woe is me !  
Here will I die; here will I die;  
I thought to find my lost one here,  
But he is neither far nor near,  
Oh ! what a wretched Mother I !"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;  
Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
Poor Betty ! it would ease her pain  
If she had heart to knock again; 270  
— The clock strikes three — a dismal knell !

Then up along the town she lies,  
No wonder if her senses fail;  
This piteous news so much it shocked her,  
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,  
And she can see a mile of road:  
"O cruel ! I'm almost threescore;  
Such night as this was ne'er before,  
There's not a single soul abroad." 280

She listens, but she cannot hear  
The foot of horse, the voice of man;  
The streams with softest sound are flowing,  
The grass you almost hear it growing,  
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night  
Are shouting to each other still:

Fond lovers ! yet not quite hob nob,  
They lengthen out the tremulous sob, 290  
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,  
A green-grown pond she just has past,  
And from the brink she hurries fast,  
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;  
Such tears she never shed before;  
"Oh dear, dear Pony ! my sweet joy !  
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy ! 300  
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:  
The Pony he is mild and good,  
And we have always used him well;  
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,  
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;  
She thinks no more of deadly sin;  
If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
The last of all her thoughts would be 310  
To drown herself therein.

O Reader ! now that I might tell  
What Johnny and his Horse are doing,  
What they've been doing all this time,  
Oh could I put it into rhyme,  
A most delightful tale pursuing !

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought !  
He with his Pony now doth roam  
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,  
To lay his hands upon a star, 320  
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
His face unto his horse's tail,  
And, still and mute, in wonder lost,  
All silent as a horseman-ghost,  
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,  
A fierce and dreadful hunter he;  
Yon valley, now so trim and green,  
In five months' time, should he be seen, 330  
A desert wilderness will be !

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,  
And like the very soul of evil,

He's galloping away, away,  
And so will gallop on for aye,  
The bane of all that dread the devil !

I to the Muses have been bound  
These fourteen years, by strong indentures.  
O gentle Muses ! let me tell  
But half of what to him befell; 340  
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses ! is this kind ?  
Why will ye thus my suit repel ?  
Why of your further aid bereave me ?  
And can ye thus unfriended leave me,  
Ye Muses ! whom I love so well ?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,  
Which thunders down with headlong force,  
Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,  
As careless as if nothing were, 350  
Sits upright on a feeding horse ?

Unto his horse — there feeding free,  
He seems, I think, the rein to give;  
Of moon or stars he takes no heed;  
Of such we in romances read:  
— 'T is Johnny ! Johnny ! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too !  
Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?  
She hardly can sustain her fears;  
The roaring waterfall she hears, 360  
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold:  
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !  
She's coming from among the trees,  
And now all full in view she sees  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too:  
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?  
It is no goblin, 't is no ghost,  
'T is he whom you so long have lost 370  
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again — her arms are up —  
She screams — she cannot move for joy;  
She darts, as with a torrent's force,  
She almost has o'erturned the Horse,  
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud;  
Whether in cunning or in joy

I cannot tell; but while he laughs,  
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs 380  
To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,  
And now is at the Pony's head, —  
On that side now, and now on this;  
And, almost stifled with her bliss,  
A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy;  
She's happy here, is happy there,  
She is uneasy every where; 390  
Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when  
She knows not, happy Betty Foy !  
The little Pony glad may be,  
But he is milder far than she,  
You hardly can perceive his joy.

" Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor;  
You've done your best, and that is all: "  
She took the reins, when this was said,  
And gently turned the Pony's head 400  
From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,  
The moon was setting on the hill,  
So pale you scarcely looked at her:  
The little birds began to stir,  
Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,  
Wind slowly through the woody dale;  
And who is she, betimes abroad,  
That hobbles up the steep rough road ? 410  
Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought;  
And many dreadful fears beset her,  
Both for her Messenger and Nurse;  
And, as her mind grew worse and worse,  
Her body — it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,  
On all sides doubts and terrors met her;  
Point after point did she discuss;  
And, while her mind was fighting thus, 420  
Her body still grew better.

" Alas ! what is become of them ?  
These fears can never be endured;

I'll to the wood." — The word scarce said,  
Did Susan rise up from her bed,  
As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,  
And to the wood at length is come;  
She spies her Friends, she shouts a greet-  
ing;  
Oh me ! it is a merry meeting 430  
As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,  
While our four travellers homeward wend;  
The owls have hooted all night long,  
And with the owls began my song,  
And with the owls must end.

For while they all were travelling home,  
Cried Betty, "Tell us, Johnny, do,  
Where all this long night you have been,  
What you have heard, what you have  
seen: 440  
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard  
The owls in tuneful concert strive;  
No doubt too he the moon had seen;  
For in the moonlight he had been  
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he  
Made answer, like a traveller bold,  
(His very words I give to you,) 450  
"The cocks did crow to-who, to-who, to-who,  
And the sun did shine so cold !"  
— Thus answered Johnny in his glory,  
And that was all his travel's story.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF  
THE WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13,  
1798

1798. 1798

No poem of mine was composed under cir-  
cumstances more pleasant for me to remember  
than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern,  
after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just  
as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after  
a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister.  
Not a line of it was altered, and not any part  
of it written down till I reached Bristol. It  
was published almost immediately after in the

little volume of which so much has been said  
in these Notes. — (The Lyrical Ballads, as first  
published at Bristol by Cottle.)

Five years have past; five \*summers, with  
the length  
Of five long winters ! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-  
springs

With a soft inland murmur. — Once again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and con-  
nect

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose  
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10  
These plots of cottage-ground, these  
orchard-tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe  
fruits,  
Are clad in one green hue, and lose them-  
selves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little  
lines

Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral  
farms,  
Green to the very door; and wreaths of  
smoke

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !  
With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless  
woods, 20

Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to  
me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;  
And passing even into my purer mind,

With tranquil restoration: — feelings too 30  
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence

On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,  
To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed  
mood,

In which the burthen of the mystery,



In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world, 40  
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed  
mood,

In which the affections gently lead us on,—  
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul:  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

If this  
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft— 50  
In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—  
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the  
woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!  
And now, with gleams of half-extin-  
guished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60  
The picture of the mind revives again:  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing  
thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I  
was when first

I came among these hills; when like a roe  
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the  
sides

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led: more like a man 70  
Flying from something that he dreads,  
than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For nature  
then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone  
by)

To me was all in all.—I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy  
wood,

Their colours and their forms, were then  
to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love, 80  
That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is  
past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other  
gifts

Have followed; for such loss, I would be-  
lieve,  
Abundant recompense. For I have  
learned

To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
times 90

The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample  
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;

A motion and a spirit, that impels 100  
All thinking things, all objects of all  
thought,

And rolls through all things. Therefore  
am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty  
world

Of eye, and ear,—both what they half  
create,

And what perceive; well pleased to recog-  
nise

In nature and the language of the sense,  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the  
nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart, and  
soul 110

Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,  
If I were not thus taught, should I the  
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:  
For thou art with me here upon the banks  
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,  
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I  
catch

The language of my former heart, and  
read

My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while

May I behold in thee what I was once, 120  
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I  
make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to  
lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil  
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish  
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life, 131  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we be-  
hold

Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;

And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee: and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh!  
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing  
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations! Nor, per-  
chance —

If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes  
these gleams

Of past existence — wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful stream  
We stood together; and that I, so long 151  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came  
Unwearied in that service: rather say  
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper  
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then for-  
get,

That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty  
cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were to  
me

More dear, both for themselves and for thy  
sake!

## THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR

1798. 1800

Observed, and with great benefit to my  
own heart, when I was a child: written at  
Racedown and Alfoxden in my twenty-third  
year. The political economists were about that  
time beginning their war upon mendicity in all  
its forms, and by implication, if not directly,  
on alms-giving also. This heartless process has  
been carried as far as it can go by the AMENDED  
poor-law bill, though the inhumanity that pre-  
vails in this measure is somewhat disguised by  
the profession that one of its objects is to throw  
the poor upon the voluntary donations of their  
neighbours; that is, if rightly interpreted, to  
force them into a condition between relief  
in the Union poorhouse, and alms robbed of their  
Christian grace and spirit, as being forced rather  
from the benevolent than given by them; while  
the avaricious and selfish, and all in fact  
but the humane and charitable, are at liberty  
to keep all they possess from their distressed  
brethren.

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man  
here described belongs, will probably soon be  
extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old  
and infirm persons, who confined themselves to  
a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had  
certain fixed days, on which, at different houses,  
they regularly received alms, sometimes in  
money, but mostly in provisions.

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk;  
And he was seated, by the highway side,  
On a low structure of rude masonry  
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they  
Who lead their horses down the steep rough  
road

May thence remount at ease. The aged  
Man

Had placed his staff across the broad smooth  
stone

That overlays the pile; and, from a bag  
All white with flour, the dole of village  
dames,

He drew his scraps and fragments, one by  
one; 10

And scanned them with a fixed and serious  
look

Of idle computation. In the sun,  
Upon the second step of that small pile,  
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,  
He sat, and ate his food in solitude:

And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,  
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,  
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers

Fell on the ground; and the small mountain  
birds,  
Not venturing yet to peck their destined  
meal,  
Approached within the length of half his  
staff.

    Him from my childhood have I known;  
    and then

He was so old, he seems not older now;  
He travels on, a solitary Man,  
So helpless in appearance, that for him  
The sauntering Horseman throws not with  
a slack

And careless hand his alms upon the ground,  
But stops, — that he may safely lodge the  
coin

Within the old Man's hat; nor quits him so,  
But still, when he has given his horse the  
rein,

Watches the aged Beggar with a look  
Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends  
The toll-gate, when in summer at her door  
She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees  
The aged beggar coming, quits her work,  
And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.  
The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'er-  
take

The aged Beggar in the woody lane,  
Shouts to him from behind; and if, thus  
warned,

The old man does not change his course,  
the boy

Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside,  
And passes gently by, without a curse  
Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

    He travels on, a solitary Man;

His age has no companion. On the ground  
His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along  
They move along the ground; and, ever-  
more,

Instead of common and habitual sight  
Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,  
And the blue sky, one little span of earth  
Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,  
Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,  
He plies his weary journey; seeing still,  
And seldom knowing that he sees, some  
straw,

Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one  
track,

The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left  
Impressed on the white road, — in the same  
line,

At distance still the same. Poor Traveller!  
His staff trails with him; scarcely do his feet

Disturb the summer dust; he is so still  
In look and motion, that the cottage curs,  
Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,  
Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,  
The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,  
And urchins newly breeched — all pass him  
by:

Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves  
behind.

    But deem not this Man useless. — States-  
men! ye

Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye  
Who have a broom still ready in your hands  
To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud,  
Heart-swollen, while in your pride ye con-  
template

Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him  
not

A burthen of the earth! 'T is Nature's law  
That none, the meanest of created things,  
Or forms created the most vile and brute,  
The dulllest or most noxious, should exist  
Divorced from good — a spirit and pulse of  
good,

A life and soul, to every mode of being  
Inseparably linked. Then be assured  
That least of all can aught — that ever  
owned

The heaven-regarding eye and front sub-  
line

Which man is born to — sink, howe'er de-  
pressed,

So low as to be scorned without a sin;  
Without offence to God cast out of view;  
Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower  
Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement  
Worn out and worthless. While from door  
to door,

This old Man creeps, the villagers in him  
Behold a record which together binds

Past deeds and offices of charity,  
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive  
The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of  
years,

And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,  
Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign  
To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.

Among the farms and solitary huts,  
Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,  
Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,  
The mild necessity of use compels

To acts of love; and habit does the work  
Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy  
Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,  
By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,

Doth find herself insensibly disposed  
To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,  
By their good works exalted, lofty minds  
And meditative, authors of delight  
And happiness, which to the end of time  
Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such  
minds

In childhood, from this solitary Being, <sup>110</sup>  
Or from like wanderer, haply have received  
(A thing more precious far than all that  
books

Or the solitudes of love can do !)  
That first mild touch of sympathy and  
thought,

In which they found their kindred with a  
world

Where want and sorrow were. The easy  
man

Who sits at his own door, — and, like the  
pear

That overhangs his head from the green  
wall,

Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and young,  
The prosperous and unthinking, they who  
live <sup>120</sup>

Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove  
Of their own kindred; — all behold in him  
A silent monitor, which on their minds  
Must needs impress a transitory thought  
Of self-congratulation, to the heart

Of each recalling his peculiar boons,  
His charters and exemptions; and, per-  
chance,

Though he to no one give the fortitude  
And circumspection needful to preserve  
His present blessings, and to husband up  
The respite of the season, he, at least, <sup>131</sup>  
And 't is no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further. — Many, I believe, there  
are

Who live a life of virtuous decency,  
Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel  
No self-reproach; who of the moral law  
Established in the land where they abide  
Are strict observers; and not negligent  
In acts of love to those with whom they  
dwell,

Their kindred, and the children of their  
blood. <sup>140</sup>

Praise be to such, and to their slumbers  
peace !

— But of the poor man ask, the abject poor;  
Go, and demand of him, if there be here  
In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,

And these inevitable charities,  
Wherewith to satisfy the human soul ?

No — man is dear to man; the poorest poor  
Long for some moments in a weary life  
When they can know and feel that they  
have been,

Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out  
Of some small blessings; have been kind to  
such <sup>151</sup>

As needed kindness, for this single cause,  
That we have all of us one human heart.

— Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,  
My neighbour, when with punctual care,  
each week

Duly as Friday comes, though pressed her-  
self

By her own wants, she from her store of  
meal

Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip  
Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door  
Returning with exhilarated heart, <sup>160</sup>  
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in  
heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !  
And while in that vast solitude to which  
The tide of things has borne him, he ap-  
pears

To breathe and live but for himself alone,  
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about  
The good which the benignant law of  
Heaven

Has hung around him: and, while life is his,  
Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers  
To tender offices and pensive thoughts. <sup>170</sup>  
— Then let him pass, a blessing on his  
head !

And, long as he can wander, let him breathe  
The freshness of the valleys; let his blood  
Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;  
And let the chartered wind that sweeps the  
heath

Beat his grey locks against his withered  
face.

Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness  
Gives the last human interest to his heart.  
May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,  
Make him a captive ! — for that pent-up  
din, <sup>180</sup>

Those life-consuming sounds that clog the  
air,

Be his the natural silence of old age !  
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;  
And have around him, whether heard or not,  
The pleasant melody of woodland birds.  
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have now

Been doomed so long to settle upon earth  
That not without some effort they behold  
The countenance of the horizontal sun,  
Rising or setting, let the light at least <sup>190</sup>  
Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.  
And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit  
down

Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank  
Of highway side, and with the little birds  
Share his chance-gathered meal; and,  
finally,

As in the eye of Nature he has lived,  
So in the eye of Nature let him die !

### ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY

1798. 1798

THE little hedgerow birds,  
That peck along the roads, regard him not.  
He travels on, and in his face, his step,  
His gait, is one expression: every limb,  
His look and bending figure, all bespeak  
A man who does not move with pain, but  
moves

With thought. — He is insensibly subdued  
To settled quiet: he is one by whom  
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom  
Long patience hath such mild composure  
given,  
That patience now doth seem a thing of  
which

He hath no need. He is by nature led  
To peace so perfect that the young behold  
With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

PETER BELL

A TALE

What 's in a Name?

Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar !

1798. 1819

Written at Alfoxden. Founded upon an anecdote, which I read in a newspaper, of an ass being found hanging his head over a canal in a wretched posture. Upon examination a dead body was found in the water and proved to be the body of its master. The countenance, gait, and figure of Peter, were taken from a wild

rover with whom I walked from Builth, on the river Wye, downwards nearly as far as the town of Hay. He told me strange stories. It has always been a pleasure to me through life to catch at every opportunity that has occurred in my rambles of becoming acquainted with this class of people. The number of Peter's wives was taken from the trespasses in this way of a lawless creature who lived in the county of Durham, and used to be attended by many women, sometimes not less than half a dozen, as disorderly as himself. Benoni, or the child of sorrow, I knew when I was a school-boy. His mother had been deserted by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, she herself being a gentlewoman by birth. The circumstances of her story were told me by my dear old Dame, Anne Tyson, who was her confidante. The Lady died broken-hearted. — In the woods of Alfoxden I used to take great delight in noticing the habits, tricks, and physiognomy of asses; and I have no doubt that I was thus put upon writing the poem out of liking for the creature that is so often dreadfully abused. — The crescent-moon, which makes such a figure in the prologue, assumed this character one evening while I was watching its beauty in front of Alfoxden House. I intended this poem for the volume before spoken of, but it was not published for more than twenty years afterwards. — The worship of the Methodists or Ranters is often heard during the stillness of the summer evening in the country with affecting accompaniments of rural beauty. In both the psalmody and the voice of the preacher there is, not unfrequently, much solemnity likely to impress the feelings of the rudest characters under favourable circumstances.

TO

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L.,  
ETC. ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its minority: — for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or, rather, to fit it for filling permanently a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man,

who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted, that to you, as a Master in that province of the Art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, April 7, 1819.

#### PROLOGUE

THERE 's something in a flying horse,  
There 's something in a huge balloon;  
But through the clouds I'll never float  
Until I have a little Boat,  
Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,  
In shape a very crescent-moon:  
Fast through the clouds my boat can sail;  
But if perchance your faith should fail,  
Look up — and you shall see me soon! 10

The woods, my Friends, are round you  
    roaring,  
Rocking and roaring like a sea;  
The noise of danger 's in your cars,  
And ye have all a thousand fears  
Both for my little Boat and me!

Meanwhile untroubled I admire  
The pointed horns of my canoe;  
And, did not pity touch my breast,  
To see how ye are all distrest,  
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you! 20

Away we go, my Boat and I —  
Frail man ne'er sate in such another;  
Whether among the winds we strive,  
Or deep into the clouds we dive,  
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go — and what care we  
For treasons, tumults, and for wars?  
We are as calm in our delight  
As is the crescent-moon so bright  
Among the scattered stars. 30

Up goes my Boat among the stars  
Through many a breathless field of light,  
Through many a long blue field of ether,  
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her:  
Up goes my little Boat so bright!

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull —  
We pry among them all; have shot  
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,  
Covered from top to toe with scars;  
Such company I like it not! 40

The towns in Saturn are decayed,  
And melancholy Spectres throng them; —  
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss  
Each other in the vast abyss,  
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,  
Great Jove is full of stately bowers;  
But these, and all that they contain,  
What are they to that tiny grain,  
That little Earth of ours? 50

Then back to Earth, the dear green  
    Earth: —  
Whole ages if I here should roam,  
The world for my remarks and me  
Would not a whit the better be;  
I've left my heart at home.

See! there she is, the matchless Earth!  
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean!  
Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear  
Through the grey clouds; the Alps are  
    here,  
Like waters in commotion! 60

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands;  
That silver thread the river Dnieper!  
And look, where clothed in brightest green  
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen;  
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her!

And see the town where I was born !  
 Around those happy fields we span  
 In boyish gambols ;— I was lost  
 Where I have been, but on this coast  
 I feel I am a man.

70

Never did fifty things at once  
 Appear so lovely, never, never ;—  
 How tunefully the forests ring !  
 To hear the earth's soft murmuring  
 Thus could I hang for ever !

"Shame on you !" cried my little Boat,  
 "Was ever such a homesick Loon,  
 Within a living Boat to sit,  
 And make no better use of it ;  
 A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon !

80

"Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet  
 Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—  
 Was it the music of the spheres  
 That overpowered your mortal ears ?  
 — Such din shall trouble them no more.

"These nether precincts do not lack  
 Charms of their own ;— then come with  
 me ;  
 I want a comrade, and for you  
 There's nothing that I would not do ;  
 Nought is there that you shall not see.

90

"Haste ! and above Siberian snows  
 We'll sport amid the boreal morning ;  
 Will mingle with her lustres gliding  
 Among the stars, the stars now hiding,  
 And now the stars adorning.

"I know the secrets of a land  
 Where human foot did never stray ;  
 Fair is that land as evening skies,  
 And cool, though in the depth it lies  
 Of burning Africa.

100

"Or we'll into the realm of Faery,  
 Among the lovely shades of things ;  
 The shadowy forms of mountains bare,  
 And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,  
 The shades of palaces and kings !

"Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal  
 Less quiet regions to explore,  
 Prompt voyage shall to you reveal  
 How earth and heaven are taught to feel  
 The might of magic lore !"

110

"My little vagrant Form of light,  
 My gay and beautiful Canoe,  
 Well have you played your friendly part ;  
 As kindly take what from my heart  
 Experience forces — then adieu !

"Temptation lurks among your words ;  
 But, while these pleasures you're pur-  
 suing  
 Without impediment or let,  
 No wonder if you quite forget  
 What on the earth is doing.

120

"There was a time when all mankind  
 Did listen with a faith sincere  
 To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;  
 Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed  
 The wonders of a wild career.

"Go — (but the world's a sleepy world,  
 And 't is, I fear, an age too late)  
 Take with you some ambitious Youth !  
 For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,  
 Am all unfit to be your mate.

130

"Long have I loved what I behold,  
 The night that calms, the day that cheers ;  
 The common growth of mother-earth  
 Suffices me — her tears, her mirth,  
 Her humblest mirth and tears.

"The dragon's wing, the magic ring,  
 I shall not covet for my dower,  
 If I along that lowly way  
 With sympathetic heart may stray,  
 And with a soul of power.

140

"These given, what more need I desire  
 To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?  
 What nobler marvels than the mind  
 May in life's daily prospect find,  
 May find or there create ?

"A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;  
 What spell so strong as guilty Fear !  
 Repentance is a tender Sprite ;  
 If aught on earth have heavenly might,  
 'T is lodged within her silent tear.

150

"But grant my wishes, — let us now  
 Descend from this ethereal height ;  
 Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,  
 More daring far than Hippogriff,  
 And be thy own delight !

"To the stone-table in my garden,  
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,  
The Squire is come: his daughter Bess  
Beside him in the cool recess  
Sits blooming like a flower. 160

"With these are many more convened;  
They know not I have been so far; —  
I see them there, in number nine,  
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine!  
I see them — there they are!

"There sits the Vicar and his Dame;  
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter;  
And, ere the light of evening fail,  
To them I must relate the Tale  
Of Peter Bell the Potter." 170

Off flew the Boat — away she flees,  
Spurning her freight with indignation!  
And I, as well as I was able,  
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table  
Limped on with sore vexation.

"O, here he is!" cried little Bess —  
She saw me at the garden-door;  
"We've waited anxiously and long,"  
They cried, and all around me throng,  
Full nine of them or more! 180

"Reproach me not — your fears be still —  
Be thankful we again have met; —  
Resume, my Friends! within the shade  
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid  
The well-remembered debt."

I spake with faltering voice, like one  
Not wholly rescued from the pale  
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion;  
But, straight, to cover my confusion,  
Began the promised Tale. 190

# PART FIRST

ALL by the moonlight river side  
Groaned the poor Beast — alas! in vain;  
The staff was raised to loftier height,  
And the blows fell with heavier weight  
As Peter struck — and struck again.

"Hold!" cried the Squire, "against the  
rules  
Of common sense you're surely sinning;  
This leap is for us all too bold;  
Who Peter was, let that be told,  
And start from the beginning." 10

— "A Potter, Sir, he was by trade,"  
Said I, becoming quite collected;  
"And wheresoever he appeared,  
Full twenty times was Peter feared  
For once that Peter was respected.

"He, two-and-thirty years or more,  
Had been a wild and woodland rover;  
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar  
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,  
And trod the cliffs of Dover. 20

"And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,  
And well he knew the spire of Sarum;  
And he had been where Lincoln bell  
Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell —  
A far-renowned alarm!

"At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,  
And merry Carlisle had he been;  
And all along the Lowlands fair,  
All through the bonnie shire of Ayr  
And far as Aberdeen. 30

"And he had been at Inverness;  
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,  
Had danced his round with Highland  
lasses;  
And he had lain beside his asses  
On lofty Cheviot Hills:

"And he had trudged through Yorkshire  
dales,  
Among the rocks and winding scars;  
Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky  
And little lot of stars: 40

"And all along the indented coast,  
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam;  
Where'er a knot of houses lay  
On headland, or in hollow bay; —  
Sure never man like him did roam!

"As well might Peter, in the Fleet,  
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor; —  
He travelled here, he travelled there; —  
But not the value of a hair  
Was heart or head the better. 50

"He roved among the vales and streams,  
In the green wood and hollow dell;  
They were his dwellings night and day, —  
But nature ne'er could find the way  
Into the heart of Peter Bell.



"In vain, through every changeful year,  
Did Nature lead him as before;  
A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.

60

"Small change it made on Peter's heart  
To see his gentle panniered train  
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,  
Where'er the tender grass was leading  
Its earliest green along the lane.

"In vain, through water, earth, and air,  
The soul of happy sound was spread,  
When Peter on some April morn,  
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,  
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

70

"At noon, when, by the forest's edge  
He lay beneath the branches high,  
The soft blue sky did never melt  
Into his heart; he never felt  
The witchery of the soft blue sky!

"On a fair prospect some have looked  
And felt, as I have heard them say,  
As if the moving time had been  
A thing as steadfast as the scene  
On which they gazed themselves away.

80

"Within the breast of Peter Bell  
These silent raptures found no place;  
He was a Carl as wild and rude  
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,  
As ever ran a felon's race.

"Of all that lead a lawless life,  
Of all that love their lawless lives,  
In city or in village small,  
He was the wildest far of all;—  
He had a dozen wedded wives.

90

"Nay, start not!—wedded wives—and  
twelve!

But how one wife could e'er come near  
him,  
In simple truth I cannot tell;  
For, be it said of Peter Bell,  
To see him was to fear him.

"Though Nature could not touch his heart  
By lovely forms, and silent weather,  
And tender sounds, yet you might see  
At once, that Peter Bell and she  
Had often been together.

100

"A savage wildness round him hung  
As of a dweller out of doors;  
In his whole figure and his mien  
A savage character was seen  
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

"To all the unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary Nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,  
Had Peter joined whatever vice  
The cruel city breeds.

110

"His face was keen as is the wind  
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence;—  
Of courage you saw little there,  
But, in its stead, a medley air  
Of cunning and of impudence.

"He had a dark and sidelong walk,  
And long and slouching was his gait;  
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,  
You might perceive, his spirit cold  
Was playing with some inward bait.

120

"His forehead wrinkled was and furred;  
A work, one half of which was done  
By thinking of his 'whens' and 'hows';  
And half, by knitting of his brows  
Beneath the glaring sun.

"There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As if the man had fixed his face,  
In many a solitary place,  
Against the wind and open sky!"

130

ONE NIGHT, (and now my little Bess!  
We've reached at last the promised Tale:)  
One beautiful November night,  
When the full moon was shining bright  
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks  
Peter was travelling all alone;—  
Whether to buy or sell, or led  
By pleasure running in his head,  
To me was never known.

140

He trudged along through copse and brake,  
He trudged along o'er hill and dale;  
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,  
And for the stars he cared as little,  
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path  
That promised to cut short the way,  
As many a wiser man hath done,  
He left a trusty guide for one  
That might his steps betray. 150

To a thick wood he soon is brought  
Where cheerily his course he weaves,  
And whistling loud may yet be heard,  
Though often buried, like a bird  
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,  
And on he drives with cheeks that burn  
In downright fury and in wrath; —  
There's little sign the treacherous path  
Will to the road return ! 160

The path grows dim, and dimmer still;  
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,  
With all the sail that he can carry,  
Till brought to a deserted quarry —  
And there the pathway ends.

He paused — for shadows of strange shape,  
Massy and black, before him lay;  
But through the dark, and through the cold,  
And through the yawning fissures old,  
Did Peter boldly press his way 170

Right through the quarry; — and behold  
A scene of soft and lovely hue !  
Where blue and grey, and tender green,  
Together make as sweet a scene  
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw  
A little field of meadow ground;  
But field or meadow name it not;  
Call it of earth a small green plot,  
With rocks encompassed round. 180

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,  
But he flowed quiet and unseen; —  
You need a strong and stormy gale  
To bring the noises of the Swale  
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,  
No hermit with his beads and glass ?  
And does no little cottage look  
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?  
Does no one live near this green grass ? 190

Across the deep and quiet spot  
Is Peter driving through the grass —  
And now has reached the skirting trees;  
When, turning round his head, he sees  
A solitary Ass.

"A Prize !" cries Peter — but he first  
Must spy about him far and near:  
There's not a single house in sight,  
No woodman's hut, no cottage light —  
Peter, you need not fear ! 200

There's nothing to be seen but woods,  
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,  
And this one Beast, that from the bed  
Of the green meadow hangs his head  
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound;  
The halter seizing, Peter leapt  
Upon the Creature's back, and plied  
With ready heels his shaggy side;  
But still the Ass his station kept. 210

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,  
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor  
Would have pulled up an iron ring;  
But still the heavy-headed Thing  
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,  
"There is some plot against me laid;"  
Once more the little meadow-ground  
And all the hoary cliffs around  
He cautiously surveyed. 220

All, all is silent — rocks and woods,  
All still and silent — far and near !  
Only the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ?  
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !  
— Once more the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turned round his long left ear. 230

Suspicion ripened into dread;  
Yet with deliberate action slow,  
His staff high-raising, in the pride  
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,  
He dealt a sturdy blow.

The poor Ass staggered with the shock;  
And then, as if to take his ease,  
In quiet uncomplaining mood,  
Upon the spot where he had stood,  
Dropped gently down upon his knees: 240

As gently on his side he fell;  
And by the river's brink did lie;  
And, while he lay like one that mourned,  
The patient Beast on Peter turned  
His shining hazel eye.

'T was but one mild, reproachful look,  
A look more tender than severe;  
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,  
He turned the eye-ball in his head 249  
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings;  
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they  
    stirred;  
He gave a groan, and then another,  
Of that which went before the brother,  
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side  
He gave three miserable groans;  
And not till now hath Peter seen  
How gaunt the Creature is, — how lean  
And sharp his staring bones ! 260

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay: —  
No word of kind commiseration  
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue;  
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,  
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death;  
And Peter's lips with fury quiver;  
Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,  
I 'll fling your carcase like a log  
Head-foremost down the river ! " 270

An impious oath confirmed the threat —  
Whereat from the earth on which he lay  
To all the echoes, south and north,  
And east and west, the Ass sent forth  
A long and clamorous bray !

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,  
Seems like a note of joy to strike, —  
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks;  
But in the echo of the rocks  
Was something Peter did not like. 280

Whether to cheer his coward breast,  
Or that he could not break the chain,  
In this serene and solemn hour,  
Twined round him by demoniac power,  
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags;  
Among the mountains far away;  
Once more the Ass did lengthen out  
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout, 289  
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray !

What is there now in Peter's heart ?  
Or whence the might of this strange sound ?  
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,  
The broad blue heavens appeared to glim-  
    mer,  
And the rocks staggered all around —

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !  
Threat has he none to execute;  
" If any one should come and see  
That I am here, they 'll think," quoth he,  
" I 'm helping this poor dying brute." 300

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,  
And ventures now to uplift his eyes;  
More steady looks the moon, and clear,  
More like themselves the rocks appear  
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns — his hate revives;  
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize  
With malice — that again takes flight;  
For in the pool a startling sight  
Meets him, among the inverted trees. 310

Is it the moon's distorted face ?  
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?  
Is it a gallows there portrayed ?  
Is Peter of himself afraid ?  
Is it a coffin, — or a shroud ?

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?  
Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?  
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?  
Such as pursue their feared vagaries  
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ? 320

Is it a fiend that to a stake  
Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?  
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell  
In solitary ward or cell,  
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,  
And never heart so loudly panted;  
He looks, he cannot choose but look;  
Like some one reading in a book —  
A book that is enchanted.

330

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell !  
He will be turned to iron soon,  
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !  
His hat is up — and every hair  
Bristles, and whitens in the moon !

He looks, he ponders, looks again;  
He sees a motion — hears a groan;  
His eyes will burst — his heart will break —  
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,  
And back he falls, as if his life were  
flown !

340

PART SECOND

WE left our Hero in a trance,  
Beneath the alders, near the river;  
The Ass is by the river-side,  
And, where the feeble breezes glide,  
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! but at length  
He feels the glimmering of the moon;  
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sigh-  
ing —  
To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,  
Into a second swoon !

10

He lifts his head, he sees his staff;  
He touches — 't is to him a treasure !  
Faint recollection seems to tell  
That he is yet where mortals dwell —  
A thought received with languid pleasure !

His head upon his elbow propped,  
Becoming less and less perplexed,  
Sky-ward he looks — to rock and wood —  
And then — upon the glassy flood  
His wandering eye is fixed.

20

Thought he, that is the face of one  
In his last sleep securely bound !  
So toward the stream his head he bent,  
And downward thrust his staff, intent  
The river's depth to sound.

Now — like a tempest-shattered bark,  
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,  
And in a moment to the verge

Is lifted of a foaming surge —  
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise !

30

His staring bones all shake with joy,  
And close by Peter's side he stands:  
While Peter o'er the river bends,  
The little Ass his neck extends,  
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,  
Such life is in his limbs and ears;  
That Peter Bell, if he had been  
The veriest coward ever seen,  
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

40

The Ass looks on — and to his work  
Is Peter quietly resigned;  
He touches here — he touches there —  
And now among the dead man's hair  
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls — and looks — and pulls again;  
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,  
The man who had been four days dead,  
Head-foremost from the river's bed  
Uprises like a ghost !

50

And Peter draws him to dry land;  
And through the brain of Peter pass  
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster;  
“No doubt,” quoth he, “he is the Master  
Of this poor miserable Ass !”

The meagre Shadow that looks on —  
What would he now ? what is he doing ?  
His sudden fit of joy is flown, —  
He on his knees bath laid him down,  
As if he were his grief renewing;

60

But no — that Peter on his back  
Must mount, he shows well as he can:  
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,  
I'll do what he would have me do,  
In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts  
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass;  
And then, without a moment's stay,  
That earnest Creature turned away  
Leaving the body on the grass.

70

Intent upon his faithful watch,  
The Beast four days and nights had past;  
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,  
And there the Ass four days had been,  
Nor ever once did break his fast:

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart;  
The mead is crossed — the quarry's mouth  
Is reached; but there the trusty guide  
Into a thicket turns aside,  
And deftly adibles towards the south. 80

When hark a burst of doleful sound !  
And Peter honestly might say,  
The like came never to his ears,  
Though he has been, full thirty years,  
A rover — night and day !

'T is not a plover of the moors,  
'T is not a bittern of the fen;  
Nor can it be a barking fox,  
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,  
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen ! 90

The Ass is startled — and stops short  
Right in the middle of the thicket;  
And Peter, wont to whistle loud  
Whether alone or in a crowd,  
Is silent as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Bess ?  
Well may you tremble and look grave !  
This cry — that rings along the wood,  
This cry — that floats adown the flood,  
Comes from the entrance of a cave: 100

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,  
And if I had the power to say  
How sorrowful the wanderer is,  
Your heart would be as sad as his  
Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,  
All bright with berries ripe and red,  
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps;  
Thence back into the moonlight creeps;  
Whom seeks he — whom ? — the silent  
dead : 110

His father ! — Him doth he require —  
Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,  
Among the rocks, behind the trees;  
Now creeping on his hands and knees,  
Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,  
When he through such a day has gone,  
By this dark cave to be distressed  
Like a poor bird — her plundered nest  
Hovering around with dolorous moan ! 120

Of that intense and piercing cry  
The listening Ass conjectures well;  
Wild as it is, he there can read  
Some intermingled notes that plead  
With touches irresistible.

But Peter — when he saw the Ass  
Not only stop but turn, and change  
The cherished tenor of his pace  
That lamentable cry to chase —  
It wrought in him conviction strange; 130

A faith that, for the dead man's sake  
And this poor slave who loved him well,  
Vengeance upon his head will fall,  
Some visitation worse than all  
Which ever till this night befell.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,  
Is striving stoutly as he may;  
But, while he climbs the woody hill,  
The cry grows weak — and weaker still;  
And now at last it dies away. 140

So with his freight the Creature turns  
Into a gloomy grove of beech,  
Along the shade with footsteps true  
Descending slowly, till the two  
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,  
A fair smooth pathway you discern,  
A length of green and open road —  
As if it from a fountain flowed —  
Winding away between the fern. 150

The rocks that tower on either side  
Build up a wild fantastic scene;  
Temples like those among the Hindoos,  
And mosques, and spires, and abbey win-  
dows,  
And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,  
Along this solitary dell,  
As pensively his steps advance,  
The mosques and spires change countenance  
And look at Peter Bell ! 160

That unintelligible cry  
Hath left him high in preparation, —  
Convinced that he, or soon or late,  
This very night will meet his fate —  
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb  
With the green path; and now he wends  
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,  
In undisturbed immensity  
A level plain extends. 170

But whence this faintly-rustling sound  
By which the journeying pair are chased ?  
— A withered leaf is close behind,  
Light plaything for the sportive wind  
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,  
It only doubled his distress;  
“Where there is not a bush or tree,  
The very leaves they follow me —  
So huge hath been my wickedness !” 180

To a close lane they now are come,  
Where, as before, the enduring Ass  
Moves on without a moment's stop,  
Nor once turns round his head to crop  
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,  
The white dust sleeps upon the lane;  
And Peter, ever and anon  
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,  
Or in the dust, a crimson stain. 190

A stain — as of a drop of blood  
By moonlight made more faint and wan;  
Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?  
He knows not how the blood comes there —  
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,  
Where he had struck the Ass's head;  
He sees the blood, knows what it is, —  
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,  
But then it quickly fled; 200

Of him whom sudden death had seized  
He thought, — of thee, O faithful Ass !  
And once again those ghastly pains,  
Shoot to and fro through heart and reins,  
And through his brain like lightning pass.

### PART THIRD

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,  
Though given to sadness and to gloom,  
And for the fact will vouch, — one night  
It chanced that by a taper's light  
This man was reading in his room;

Bending, as you or I might bend  
At night o'er any pious book,  
When sudden blackness overspread  
The snow-white page on which he read,  
And made the good man round him look. 10

The chamber walls were dark all round, —  
And to his book he turned again;  
— The light had left the lonely taper,  
And formed itself upon the paper  
Into large letters — bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand —  
And, on the page, more black than coal,  
Appeared, set forth in strange array,  
A word — which to his dying day  
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul. 20

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,  
Did never from his lips depart;  
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !  
It brought full many a sin to light  
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek  
Why wander from your course so far,  
Disordering colour, form, and stature !  
— Let good men feel the soul of nature,  
And see things as they are. 30

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,  
How ye, that play with soul and sense,  
Are not unused to trouble friends  
Of goodness, for most gracious ends —  
And this I speak in reverence !

But might I give advice to you,  
Whom in my fear I love so well;  
From men of pensive virtue go,  
Dread Beings ! and your empire show  
On hearts like that of Peter Bell. 40

Your presence often have I felt  
In darkness and the stormy night;  
And, with like force, if need there be,  
Ye can put forth your agency  
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,  
That powerful world in which ye dwell,  
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try  
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,  
What may be done with Peter Bell ! 50

— O, would that some more skilful voice  
My further labour might prevent !

Kind Listeners, that around me sit,  
I feel that I am all unfit  
For such high argument.

I've played, I've danced, with my narra-  
tion;

I loitered long ere I began:  
Ye waited then on my good pleasure;  
Pour out indulgence still, in measure  
As liberal as ye can !

60

Our Travellers, ye remember well,  
Are thridding a sequestered lane;  
And Peter many tricks is trying,  
And many anodynes applying,  
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far;  
And, finding that he can account  
So snugly for that crimson stain,  
His evil spirit up again  
Does like an empty bucket mount.

70

And Peter is a deep logician  
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial;  
"Blood drops — leaves rustle — yet," quoth  
he,  
"This poor man never, but for me,  
Could have had Christian burial.

"And, say the best you can, 't is plain,  
That here has been some wicked dealing;  
No doubt the devil in me wrought;  
I'm not the man who could have thought  
An Ass like this was worth the steal-  
ing !"

80

So from his pocket Peter takes  
His shining horn tobacco-box;  
And, in a light and careless way,  
As men who with their purpose play,  
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,  
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,  
Tell to a curious world the cause  
Why, making here a sudden pause,  
The Ass turned round his head, and  
*grinned.*

90

Appalling process ! I have marked  
The like on heath, in lonely wood;  
And, verily, have seldom met  
A spectacle more hideous — yet  
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth  
He in jocose defiance showed —  
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,  
A murmur, pent within the earth,  
In the dead earth beneath the road

100

Rolled audibly ! it swept along,  
A muffled noise — a rumbling sound ! —  
'T was by a troop of miners made,  
Plying with gunpowder their trade,  
Some twenty fathoms under ground.

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,  
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,  
Believed that earth was charged to quake  
And yawn for his unworthy sake,  
'T was Peter Bell the Potter.

110

But, as an oak in breathless air  
Will stand though to the centre hewn;  
Or as the weakest things, if frost  
Have stiffened them, maintain their post;  
So he, beneath the gazing moon ! —

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached  
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,  
A little chapel stands alone,  
With greenest ivy overgrown,  
And tufted with an ivy grove;

120

Dying insensibly away  
From human thoughts and purposes,  
It seemed — wall, window, roof and tower  
To bow to some transforming power,  
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,  
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife  
That served my turn, when following still  
From land to land a reckless will  
I married my sixth wife !

130

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,  
And now is passing by an inn  
Brim-full of a carousing crew,  
That make, with curses not a few,  
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts  
Which Peter in those noises found; —  
A stifling power compressed his frame,  
While-as a swimming darkness came  
Over that dull and dreary sound.

140

For well did Peter know the sound;  
The language of those drunken joys

To him, a jovial soul, I ween,  
But a few hours ago, had been  
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

Now, turned adrift into the past,  
He finds no solace in his course;  
Like planet-stricken men of yore,  
He trembles, smitten to the core  
By strong compunction and remorse. 150

But, more than all, his heart is stung  
To think of one, almost a child;  
A sweet and playful Highland girl,  
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,  
As beauteous and as wild !

Her dwelling was a lonely house,  
A cottage in a heathy dell;  
And she put on her gown of green,  
And left her mother at sixteen,  
And followed Peter Bell. 160

But many good and pious thoughts  
Had she; and, in the kirk to pray,  
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or  
snow  
To kirk she had been used to go,  
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,  
It was to lead an honest life;  
For he, with tongue not used to falter,  
Had pledged his troth before the altar  
To love her as his wedded wife. 170

A mother's hope is hers; — but soon  
She drooped and pined like one forlorn,  
From Scripture she a name did borrow;  
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,  
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,  
And took it in most grievous part;  
She to the very bone was worn,  
And, ere that little child was born,  
Died of a broken heart. 180

And now the Spirits of the Mind  
Are busy with poor Peter Bell;  
Upon the rights of visual sense  
Usurping, with a prevalence  
More terrible than magic spell.

Close by a brake of flowering furze  
(Above it shivering aspens play)

He sees an unsubstantial creature,  
His very self in form and feature,  
Not four yards from the broad high-  
way: 190

And stretched beneath the furze he sees  
The Highland girl — it is no other;  
And hears her crying as she cried,  
The very moment that she died,  
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,  
So grievous is his heart's contrition;  
With agony his eye-balls ache  
While he beholds by the furze-brake  
This miserable vision ! 200

Calm is the well-deserving brute,  
His peace hath no offence betrayed;  
But now, while down that slope he wends,  
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,  
Resounding from the woody glade:

The voice, though clamorous as a horn  
Re-echoed by a naked rock,  
Comes from that tabernacle — List !  
Within, a fervent Methodist  
Is preaching to no heedless flock ! 210

“ Repent ! repent ! ” he cries aloud,  
“ While yet ye may find mercy; — strive  
To love the Lord with all your might;  
Turn to him, seek him day and night,  
And save your souls alive ! ”

“ Repent ! repent ! though ye have gone,  
Through paths of wickedness and woe,  
After the Babylonian harlot;  
And, though your sins be red as scarlet,  
They shall be white as snow ! ” 220

Even as he passed the door, these words  
Did plainly come to Peter's ears;  
And they such joyful tidings were,  
The joy was more than he could bear ! —  
He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness !  
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower !  
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt;  
Through all his iron frame was felt  
A gentle, a relaxing, power ! 230

Each fibre of his frame was weak;  
Weak all the animal within;



But, in its helplessness, grew mild  
And gentle as an infant child,  
An infant that has known no sin.

'Tis said, meek Beast! that, through  
Heaven's grace,  
He not unmoved did notice now  
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,  
For lasting impress, by the Lord  
To whom all human-kind shall bow; 240

Memorial of his touch — that day  
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,  
Entering the proud Jerusalem,  
By an immeasurable stream  
Of shouting people deified!

Meanwhile the persevering Ass  
Turned towards a gate that hung in view  
Across a shady lane; his chest  
Against the yielding gate he pressed  
And quietly passed through. 250

And up the stony lane he goes;  
No ghost more softly ever trod;  
Among the stones and pebbles, he  
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,  
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass  
Went twice two hundred yards or more,  
And no one could have guessed his aim, —  
Till to a lonely house he came,  
And stopped beside the door. 260

Thought Peter, 't is the poor man's home!  
He listens — not a sound is heard  
Save from the trickling household rill;  
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,  
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound  
In hopes some tidings there to gather:  
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam;  
She saw — and uttered with a scream,  
"My father! here's my father!" 270

The very word was plainly heard,  
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother —  
Her joy was like a deep affright:  
And forth she rushed into the light,  
And saw it was another!

And, instantly, upon the earth,  
Beneath the full moon shining bright,

Close to the Ass's feet she fell;  
At the same moment Peter Bell  
Dismounts in most unhappy plight. 280

As he beheld the Woman lie  
Breathless and motionless, the mind  
Of Peter sadly was confused;  
But, though to such demands unused,  
And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up; and, while he held  
Her body propped against his knee,  
The Woman waked — and when she spied  
The poor Ass standing by her side,  
She moaned most bitterly. 290

"Oh! God be praised — my heart's at  
ease —  
For he is dead — I know it well!"  
— At this she wept a bitter flood;  
And, in the best way that he could,  
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles — he is pale as death;  
His voice is weak with perturbation;  
He turns aside his head, he pauses;  
Poor Peter, from a thousand causes,  
Is crippled sore in his narration. 300

At length she learned how he espied  
The Ass in that small meadow-ground;  
And that her Husband now lay dead,  
Beside that luckless river's bed  
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Widow cast  
Upon the Beast that near her stands;  
She sees 't is he, that 't is the same;  
She calls the poor Ass by his name,  
And wrings, and wrings her hands. 310

"O wretched loss — untimely stroke!  
If he had died upon his bed!  
He knew not one forewarning pain;  
He never will come home again —  
Is dead, for ever dead!"

Beside the woman Peter stands;  
His heart is opening more and more;  
A holy sense pervades his mind;  
He feels what he for human kind  
Had never felt before. 320

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,  
The Woman rises from the ground —

"Oh, mercy ! something must be done,  
My little Rachel, you must run, —  
Some willing neighbour must be found.

"Make haste — my little Rachel — do,  
The first you meet with — bid him come,  
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,  
And this good Man, whom Heaven re-  
quite,  
Will help to bring the body home." 330

Away goes Rachel weeping loud; —  
An Infant, waked by her distress,  
Makes in the house a piteous cry;  
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,  
"Seven are they, and all fatherless !"

And now is Peter taught to feel  
That man's heart is a holy thing;  
And Nature, through a world of death,  
Breathes into him a second breath, 339  
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits  
In agony of silent grief —  
From his own thoughts did Peter start;  
He longs to press her to his heart,  
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb  
Had past a sudden shock of dread,  
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,  
And up the cottage stairs she hies, 349  
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside  
Into a shade of darksome trees,  
Where he sits down, he knows not how,  
With his hands pressed against his brow,  
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit  
Until no sign of life he makes,  
As if his mind were sinking deep  
Through years that have been long asleep  
The trance is passed away — he wakes; 360

He lifts his head — and sees the Ass  
Yet standing in the clear moonshine;  
"When shall I be as good as thou?  
Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now  
A heart but half as good as thine !"

But *He* — who deviously hath sought  
His Father through the lonesome woods,

Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear  
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear — 369  
He comes, escaped from fields and floods; —

With weary pace is drawing nigh;  
He sees the Ass — and nothing living  
Had ever such a fit of joy  
As hath this little orphan Boy,  
For he has no misgiving !

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,  
And up about his neck he climbs;  
In loving words he talks to him,  
He kisses, kisses face and limb, —  
He kisses him a thousand times ! 380

This Peter sees, while in the shade  
He stood beside the cottage-door;  
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,  
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,  
"O God ! I can endure no more !"

— Here ends my Tale: for in a trice  
Arrived a neighbour with his horse;  
Peter went forth with him straightway;  
And, with due care, ere break of day,  
Together they brought back the Corse. 390

And many years did this poor Ass,  
Whom once it was my luck to see  
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,  
Help by his labour to maintain  
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,  
Had been the wildest of his clan,  
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,  
And, after ten months' melancholy,  
Became a good and honest man. 400

## THE SIMPLON PASS

1799. 1845

— BROOK and road

Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,  
And with them did we journey several hours  
At a slow step. The immeasurable height  
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,  
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and for-  
lorn,  
The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
sky,

The rocks that muttered close upon our  
ears,  
Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-  
side  
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
The unfettered clouds and region of the  
heavens,  
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light —  
Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features  
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
end.

### INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING  
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND  
EARLY YOUTH

1799. 1809

Written in Germany. This Extract is re-  
printed from *The Friend*.

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !  
Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought !  
And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion ! not in vain,  
By day or star-light, thus from my first  
dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human soul;  
Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
Man;

But with high objects, with enduring things,  
With life and nature; purifying thus 10  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying by such discipline  
Both pain and fear, — until we recognise  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to  
me

With stinted kindness. In November days,  
When vapours rolling down the valleys  
made

A lonely scene more lonesome; among  
woods

At noon; and 'mid the calm of summer  
nights, 19

When, by the margin of the trembling lake,

Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went  
In solitude, such intercourse was mine:  
Mine was it in the fields both day and  
night,

And by the waters, all the summer long.  
And in the frosty season, when the sun  
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
The cottage-windows through the twilight  
blazed,

I heeded not the summons: happy time  
It was indeed for all of us; for me  
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud  
The village-clock tolled six — I wheeled  
about, 31

Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home. — All shod  
with steel

We hissed along the polished ice, in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures, — the resounding  
horn,

The pack loud-chinning, and the hunted  
hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we  
flew,

And not a voice was idle: with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud; 40  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound

Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the  
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the  
west

The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
thrang,

To cut across the reflex of a star; 50  
Image, that, flying still before me, gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain: and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness, spin-  
ning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had  
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round ! 60  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched  
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

## THERE WAS A BOY

1799. 1800

Written in Germany. This is an extract from the poem on my own poetical education. This practice of making an instrument of their own fingers is known to most boys, though some are more skilful at it than others. William Raincock of Rayrigg, a fine spirited lad, took the lead of all my schoolfellows in this art.

THERE was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs

And islands of Winander! — many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;

And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands

Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, <sup>10</sup>  
That they might answer him. — And they would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call, — with quivering peals,

And long halloos, and screams, and echoes. <sup>loud</sup>

Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild  
Of jocund din! And, when there came a <sup>pause</sup>

Of silence such as baffled his best skill:  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he <sup>hung</sup>

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise

Has carried far into his heart the voice <sup>20</sup>  
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale

Where he was born and bred: the church-yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village-school; <sup>30</sup>

And, through that church-yard when my way has led

On summer-evenings, I believe, that there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute — looking at the grave in which he lies!

## NUTTING

1799. 1800

Written in Germany; intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my schoolfellows I was an impassioned nutter. For this pleasure, the vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice-wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys.

— It seems a day

(I speak of one from many singled out)  
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;

When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my <sup>steps</sup>

Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,

Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds

Which for that service had been husbanded,  
By exhortation of my frugal Dame — <sup>11</sup>  
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile

At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, — and, <sup>in truth,</sup>

More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,

Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,

Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
Unvisited, where not a broken bough

Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign

Of devastation; but the hazels rose <sup>19</sup>  
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,

A virgin scene! — A little while I stood,  
Breathing with such suppression of the heart

As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed

The banquet; — or beneath the trees I sate

Among the flowers, and with the flowers I  
played;

A temper known to those, who, after long  
And weary expectation, have been blest  
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.

Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
The violets of five seasons re-appear <sup>31</sup>

And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam,  
And — with my cheek on one of those green  
stones

That, fleeced with moss, under the shady  
trees,

Lay round me, scattered like a flock of  
sheep —

I heard the murmur and the murmuring  
sound,

In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to  
pay

Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure, <sup>40</sup>  
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,  
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
And dragged to earth both branch and  
bough, with crash

And merciless ravage: and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past;  
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned <sup>50</sup>  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky —  
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these  
shades

In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch — for there is a spirit in the woods.

### "STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN"

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the Lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day  
Fresh as a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way,  
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
All over the wide lea;  
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;  
And, as we climbed the hill,  
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
And all the while my eyes I kept  
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
He raised, and never stopped:  
When down behind the cottage roof,  
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide  
Into a Lover's head!  
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,  
"If Lucy should be dead!"

### "SHE DWELT AMONG THE UN- TRODDEN WAYS"

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none to praise  
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye!  
— Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

### "I TRAVELLED AMONG UN- KNOWN MEN"

1799. 1807

Written in Germany.

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,  
In lands beyond the sea;  
Nor, England! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'T is past, that melancholy dream !  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire;  
And she I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed  
The bowers where Lucy played;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

"THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN  
SUN AND SHOWER"

1799. 1800

Composed in the Hartz Forest.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown;  
This Child I to myself will take;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse: and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her; for her the willow bend; 20  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face. 30

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake — The work was done —  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene; 40  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

"A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT  
SEAL"

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

A POET'S EPITAPH

1799. 1800

ART thou a Statist in the van  
Of public conflicts trained and bred ?  
— First learn to love one living man;  
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ? — draw not high !  
Go, carry to some fitter place  
The keenness of that practised eye,  
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer ?  
A rosy Man, right plump to see ? 10  
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,  
A Soldier and no man of chaff ?  
Welcome ! — but lay thy sword aside,  
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou ? one, all eyes,  
 Philosopher ! a fingering slave,  
 One that would peep and botanise  
 Upon his mother's grave ?

20

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
 O turn aside, — and take, I pray,  
 That he below may rest in peace,  
 Thy ever-dwindling soul, away !

A Moralist perchance appears;  
 Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor sod:  
 And he has neither eyes nor ears;  
 Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can  
 cling  
 Nor form, nor feeling, great or small; 30  
 A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
 An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door; press down the latch;  
 Sleep in thy intellectual crust;  
 Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
 Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,  
 And clad in homely russet brown ?  
 He murmurs near the running brooks  
 A music sweeter than their own. 40

He is retired as noontide dew,  
 Or fountain in a noon-day grove;  
 And you must love him, ere to you  
 He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
 Of hill and valley, he has viewed;  
 And impulses of deeper birth  
 Have come to him in solitude.

• In common things that round us lie  
 Some random truths he can impart, — 50  
 The harvest of a quiet eye  
 That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,  
 Hath been an idler in the land;  
 Contented if he might enjoy  
 The things which others understand.

— Come hither in thy hour of strength;  
 Come, weak as is a breaking wave !  
 Here stretch thy body at full length;  
 Or build thy house upon this grave. 60

## ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —

1799. 1845

Composed at Goslar, in Germany.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,  
 Not long your pastime to prevent;  
 I heard the blessing which to you  
 Our common Friend and Father sent.  
 I kissed his cheek before he died;  
 And when his breath was fled,  
 I raised, while kneeling by his side,  
 His hand: — it dropped like lead.

Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all  
 That can be done, will never fall 10  
 Like his till they are dead.  
 By night or day blow foul or fair,  
 Ne'er will the best of all your train  
 Play with the locks of his white hair,  
 Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours;  
 But he could see the woods and plains,  
 Could hear the wind and mark the showers  
 Come streaming down the streaming panes.  
 Now stretched beneath his grass-green  
 mound 20

He rests a prisoner of the ground.  
 He loved the breathing air,  
 He loved the sun, but if it rise  
 Or set, to him where now he lies,  
 Brings not a moment's care.  
 Alas ! what idle words; but take  
 The Dirge which for our Master's sake  
 And yours, love prompted me to make.  
 The rhymes so homely in attire  
 With learned ears may ill agree, 30  
 But chanted by your Orphan Quire  
 Will make a touching melody.

### DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone;  
 Thou Angler, by the silent flood;  
 And mourn when thou art all alone,  
 Thou Woodman, in the distant wood !

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy  
 Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;  
 And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy !  
 Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb. 40

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide  
 Who checked or turned thy headstrong  
 youth,

As he before had sanctified  
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,  
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,  
Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,  
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain  
With one accord our voices raise, 50  
Let sorrow overcharged with pain  
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting  
From ill we meet or good we miss,  
May touches of his memory bring  
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS  
AFTER

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat,  
But benefits, his gift, we trace —  
Expressed in every eye we meet  
Round this dear Vale, his native place. 60

To stately Hall and Cottage rude  
Flowed from his life what still they hold,  
Light pleasures, every day, renewed;  
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,  
Thy faults, where not already gone  
From memory, prolong their stay  
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss;  
And what beyond this thought we crave 70  
Comes in the promise from the Cross,  
Shining upon thy happy grave.

### MATTHEW

1799. 1800

In the School of — is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This and other poems connected with Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of

facts. Like the Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster was made up of several both of his class and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling.

If Nature, for a favourite child,  
In thee hath tempered so her clay,  
That every hour thy heart runs wild,  
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines: and then review  
This tablet, that thus humbly rears  
In such diversity of hue  
Its history of two hundred years.

— When through this little wreck of fame,  
Cipher and syllable! thine eye 10  
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,  
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,  
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:  
For Matthew a request I make  
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,  
Is silent as a standing pool;  
Far from the chimney's merry roar,  
And murmur of the village school. 20

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs  
Of one tired out with fun and madness;  
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes  
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup  
Of still and serious thought went round,  
It seemed as if he drank it up —  
He felt with spirit so profound.

— Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!  
Thou happy Soul! and can it be 30  
That these two words of glittering gold  
Are all that must remain of thee?

### THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

1799. 1800

We walked along, while bright and red  
Uprose the morning sun;  
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,  
"The will of God be done!"



A village schoolmaster was he,  
With hair of glittering grey;  
As blithe a man as you could see  
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
And by the steaming rills, 10  
We travelled merrily, to pass  
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,  
Then, from thy breast what thought,  
Beneath so beautiful a sun,  
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;  
And fixing still his eye  
Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
To me he made reply: 20

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
Brings fresh into my mind  
A day like this which I have left  
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn  
Such colours, and no other,  
Were in the sky, that April morn,  
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport  
Which that sweet season gave, 30  
And, to the church-yard come, stopped  
short  
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
The pride of all the vale;  
And then she sang;— she would have been  
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I e'er had loved before. 40

"And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the church-yard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare;  
Her brow was smooth and white:  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave  
E'er tripped with foot so free; 50  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine;  
I looked at her, and looked again:  
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand. 60

## THE FOUNTAIN

### A CONVERSATION

1799. 1800

WE talked with open heart, and tongue  
Affectionate and true,  
A pair of friends, though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,  
Beside a mossy seat;  
And from the turf a fountain broke,  
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match  
This water's pleasant tune 10  
With some old border-song, or catch  
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes  
Sing here beneath the shade,  
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes  
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree;  
And thus the dear old Man replied,  
The grey-haired man of glee: 20

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears;  
How merrily it goes!  
'T will murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,  
I cannot choose but think  
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

30

"Thus fares it still in our decay:  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please,  
Are quiet when they will.

40

"With Nature never do *they* wage  
A foolish strife; they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free:

"But we are pressed by heavy laws;  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth,  
The household hearts that were his own;  
It is the man of mirth.

50

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone,  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me; but by none  
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,  
The man who thus complains;  
I live and sing my idle songs  
Upon these happy plains;

60

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead  
I'll be a son to thee!"  
At this he grasped my hand, and said,  
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side;  
And down the smooth descent  
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;  
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,  
He sang those witty rhymes  
About the crazy old church-clock,  
And the bewildered chimes.

70

## TO A SEXTON

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

LET thy wheel-barrow alone —  
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still  
In thy bone-house bone on bone?  
'T is already like a hill  
In a field of battle made,  
Where three thousand skulls are laid;  
These died in peace each with the other, —  
Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point!  
From this platform, eight feet square, 10  
Take not even a finger-joint:  
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.  
Here, alone, before thine eyes,  
Simon's sickly daughter lies,  
From weakness now, and pain defended,  
Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride —  
How he glories, when he sees  
Roses, lilies, side by side,  
Violets in families! 20  
By the heart of Man, his tears,  
By his hopes and by his fears,  
Thou, too heedless, art the Warden  
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,  
Let them all in quiet lie,  
Andrew there, and Susan here,  
Neighbours in mortality.  
And, should I live through sun and rain  
Seven widowed years without my Jane, 30  
O Sexton, do not then remove her,  
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover!

## THE DANISH BOY

A FRAGMENT

1799. 1800

Written in Germany. It was entirely a fancy;  
but intended as a prelude to a ballad poem  
never written.

I

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills  
There is a spot that seems to lie  
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,  
And sacred to the sky.

And in this smooth and open dell  
 There is a tempest-stricken tree;  
 A corner-stone by lightning cut,  
 The last stone of a lonely hut;  
 And in this dell you see  
 A thing no storm can e'er destroy, 10  
 The shadow of a Danish Boy.

## II

In clouds above, the lark is heard,  
 But drops not here to earth for rest;  
 Within this lonesome nook the bird  
 Did never build her nest.  
 No beast, no bird hath here his home;  
 Bees, wafted on the breezy air,  
 Pass high above those fragrant bells  
 To other flowers: — to other dells  
 Their burthens do they bear; 20  
 The Danish Boy walks here alone:  
 The lovely dell is all his own.

## III

A Spirit of noon-day is he;  
 Yet seems a form of flesh and blood;  
 Nor piping shepherd shall he be,  
 Nor herd-boy of the wood.  
 A regal vest of fur he wears,  
 In colour like a raven's wing;  
 It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew;  
 But in the storm 't is fresh and blue 30  
 As budding pines in spring;  
 His helmet has a vernal grace,  
 Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

## IV

A harp is from his shoulder slung;  
 Resting the harp upon his knee,  
 To words of a forgotten tongue  
 He suits its melody.  
 Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill  
 He is the darling and the joy;  
 And often, when no cause appears, 40  
 The mountain-ponies prick their ears,  
 — They hear the Danish Boy,  
 While in the dell he sings alone  
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.

## V

There sits he; in his face you spy  
 No trace of a ferocious air,  
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky  
 So steady or so fair.  
 The lovely Danish Boy is blest  
 And happy in his flowery cove: 50

From bloody deeds his thoughts are far;  
 And yet he warbles songs of war,  
 That seem like songs of love,  
 For calm and gentle is his mien;  
 Like a dead Boy he is serene.

## LUCY GRAY

## OR, SOLITUDE

1799. 1800

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not, far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavoured to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment.

OfT I had heard of Lucy Gray:  
 And, when I crossed the wild,  
 I chanced to see at break of day  
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;  
 She dwelt on a wide moor,  
 — The sweetest thing that ever grew  
 Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
 The hare upon the green; 10  
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
 Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night —  
 You to the town must go;  
 And take a lantern, Child, to light  
 Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:  
 'T is scarcely afternoon —  
 The minster-clock has just struck two,  
 And yonder is the moon!" 20

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band;  
He plied his work;— and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:  
She wandered up and down;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb:  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept — and, turning homeward, cried,  
“ In heaven we all shall meet; ”  
— When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's  
edge  
They tracked the footmarks small;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;  
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank;  
And further there were none !

— Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind

## RUTH

1799. 1800

Written in Germany. Suggested by an account I had of a wanderer in Somersetshire.

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
Her Father took another Mate;  
And Ruth, not seven years old,  
A slighted child, at her own will  
Went wandering over dale and hill,  
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,  
And music from that pipe could draw  
Like sounds of winds and floods;  
Had built a bower upon the green,  
As if she from her birth had been  
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone  
She seemed to live; her thoughts her own;  
Herself her own delight;  
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;  
And, passing thus the live-long day,  
She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's  
shore —

A military casque he wore,  
With splendid feathers drest;  
He brought them from the Cherokees;  
The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:  
But no ! he spake the English tongue,  
And bore a soldier's name;  
And, when America was free  
From battle and from jeopardy,  
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek  
In finest tones the Youth could speak:  
— While he was yet a boy,  
The moon, the glory of the sun,  
And streams that murmur as they run,  
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely youth ! I guess  
The panther in the wilderness  
Was not so fair as he;  
And, when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,  
And with him many tales he brought  
Of pleasure and of fear;  
Such tales as told to any maid  
By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls — a happy rout !  
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,  
Their pleasant Indian town, 51  
To gather strawberries all day long;  
Returning with a choral song  
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change  
Their blossoms, through a boundless range  
Of intermingling hues;  
With budding, fading, faded flowers  
They stand the wonder of the bowers 60  
From morn to evening dew.

He told of the magnolia, spread  
High as a cloud, high over head !  
The cypress and her spire;  
— Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem  
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
And many an endless, endless lake,  
With all its fairy crowds  
Of islands, that together lie 70  
As quietly as spots of sky  
Among the evening clouds.

"How pleasant," then he said, "it were  
A fisher or a hunter there,  
In sunshine or in shade  
To wander with an easy mind;  
And build a household fire, and find  
A home in every glade !

"What days and what bright years ! Ah me !  
Our life were life indeed, with thee 80  
So passed in quiet bliss,  
And all the while," said he, "to know  
That we were in a world of woe,  
On such an earth as this !"

And then he sometimes interwove  
Fond thoughts about a father's love;  
"For there," said he, "are spun  
Around the heart such tender ties,  
That our own children to our eyes  
Are dearer than the sun. 90

"Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me  
My helpmate in the woods to be,  
Our shed at night to rear;  
Or run, my own adopted bride,  
A sylvan huntress at my side,  
And drive the flying deer !

"Belovèd Ruth !" — No more he said,  
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed  
A solitary tear:  
She thought again — and did agree 100  
With him to sail across the sea,  
And drive the flying deer.

"And now, as fitting is and right,  
We in the church our faith will plight,  
A husband and a wife."  
Even so they did; and I may say  
That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
Delighted all the while to think 110  
That on those lonesome floods,  
And green savannahs, she should share  
His board with lawful joy, and bear  
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,  
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
And, with his dancing crest,  
So beautiful, through savage lands 120  
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands  
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky,  
Might well be dangerous food  
For him, a Youth to whom was given  
So much of earth — so much of heaven,  
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found  
Irregular in sight or sound  
Did to his mind impart  
A kindred impulse, seemed allied 130  
To his own powers, and justified  
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,  
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers;  
The breezes their own languor lent;  
The stars had feelings, which they sent  
Into those favoured bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween  
That sometimes there did intervene 140  
Pure hopes of high intent:  
For passions linked to form so fair  
And stately, needs must have their share  
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,  
With men to whom no better law  
Nor better life was known;  
Deliberately, and undeceived,  
Those wild men's vices he received,  
And gave them back his own. 150

His genius and his moral frame  
Were thus impaired, and he became  
The slave of low desires:  
A Man who without self-control  
Would seek what the degraded soul  
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight  
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night  
Had loved her, night and morn:  
What could he less than love a Maid 160  
Whose heart with so much nature played?  
So kind and so forlorn!

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,  
"O Ruth! I have been worse than dead;  
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,  
Encompassed me on every side  
When I, in confidence and pride,  
Had crossed the Atlantic main.

"Before me shone a glorious world —  
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled 170  
To music suddenly:  
I looked upon those hills and plains,  
And seemed as if let loose from chains,  
To live at liberty.

"No more of this; for now, by thee  
Dear Ruth! more happily set free  
With nobler zeal I burn;  
My soul from darkness is released,  
Like the whole sky when to the east  
The morning doth return." 180

Full soon that better mind was gone;  
No hope, no wish remained, not one, —  
They stirred him now no more;  
New objects did new pleasure give,  
And once again he wished to live  
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
They for the voyage were prepared,  
And went to the sea-shore,  
But, when they thither came the Youth 190  
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth  
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth! — Such pains she had,  
That she in half a year was mad,  
And in a prison housed;  
And there, with many a doleful song  
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong  
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew, 200  
Nor pastimes of the May;  
— They all were with her in her cell;  
And a clear brook with cheerful knell  
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,  
There came a respite to her pain;  
She from her prison fled;  
But of the Vagrant none took thought;  
And where it liked her best she sought  
Her shelter and her bread. 210

Among the fields she breathed again:  
The master-current of her brain  
Ran permanent and free;  
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,  
There did she rest; and dwell alone  
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools  
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
And airs that gently stir  
The vernal leaves — she loved them still;  
Nor ever taxed them with the ill 220  
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies;  
But, till the warmth of summer skies  
And summer days is gone,  
(And all do in this tale agree)  
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray!  
And Ruth will, long before her day, 230  
Be broken down and old:  
Sore aches she needs must have! but less  
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,  
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,  
 She from her dwelling in the wood  
 Repairs to a road-side;  
 And there she begs at one steep place  
 Where up and down with easy pace  
 The horsemen-travellers ride.

240

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,  
 Or thrown away; but with a flute  
 Her loneliness she cheers:  
 This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
 At evening in his homeward walk  
 The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
 Setting her little water-mills  
 By spouts and fountains wild —  
 Such small machinery as she turned 250  
 Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
 A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,  
 Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould  
 Thy corpse shall buried be,  
 For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
 And all the congregation sing  
 A Christian psalm for thee.

## WRITTEN IN GERMANY

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE  
 CENTURY

1799. 1800

A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my Sister, in our lodgings at a draper's house in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz Forest. In this town the German emperors of the Franconian line were accustomed to keep their court, and it retains vestiges of ancient splendour. So severe was the cold of this winter, that when we passed out of the parlour warmed by the stove, our cheeks were struck by the air as by cold iron. I slept in a room over a passage which was not ceiled. The people of the house used to say, rather unfeelingly, that they expected I should be frozen to death some night ; but, with the protection of a pelisse lined with fur, and a dog's-skin bonnet, such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts, or in a sort of public ground or garden, in which was a pond. Here, I had no companion but a kingfisher, a beautiful creature, that used to glance by me. I consequently became much attached to it.

During these walks I composed the poem that follows.

The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves in North-Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse !

Let me have the song of the kettle;  
 And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse

That gallops away with such fury and force

On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly, — a disconsolate creature ! perhaps

A child of the field or the grove;  
 And, sorrow for him ! the dull treacherous heat

Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,

And he creeps to the edge of my stove. 10

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains  
 Which this comfortless oven environ !

He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,

Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,

And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed:

The best of his skill he has tried;  
 His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth

To the east and the west, to the south and the north;

But he finds neither guide-post nor guide. 20

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh !

His eyesight and hearing are lost;  
 Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws;

And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze

Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him — while I

Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love;

As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,  
As if green summer grass were the floor of  
my room,  
And woodbines were hanging above. 30

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless  
Thing!  
Thy life I would gladly sustain  
Till summer come up from the south, and  
with crowds  
Of thy brethren a march thou should'st  
sound through the clouds,  
And back to the forests again!

"BLEAK SEASON WAS IT,  
TURBULENT AND WILD"

1800 (?). 1851

BLEAK season was it, turbulent and wild,  
When hitherward we journeyed, side by  
side,  
Through bursts of sunshine and through  
flying showers,  
Paced the long vales,—how long they were,  
and yet  
How fast that length of way was left be-  
hind!—  
Wensley's rich dale, and Sedberge's naked  
heights.  
The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
For its keen breath, was aiding to our  
steps,  
And drove us onward as two ships at sea;  
Or like two birds, companions in mid-air,  
Parted and reunited by the blast.  
Stern was the face of Nature; we rejoiced  
In that stern countenance; for our souls  
thence drew  
A feeling of their strength.

The naked trees,  
The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
To question us, "Whence come ye, to what  
end?"

"ON NATURE'S INVITATION DO  
I COME"

1800 (?). 1851

ON Nature's invitation do I come,  
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mis-  
lead,

That made the calmest, fairest spot on  
earth,

With all its unappropriated good,  
My own; and not mine only, for with me  
Entrenched—say rather peacefully em-  
bowered—

Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
A younger orphan of a name extinct,  
The only daughter of my parents, dwells:  
Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to  
stir; 10

Pause upon that, and let the breathing  
frame

No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.  
Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God  
For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
where then

Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did  
ne'er

Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
Take pleasure in the midst of happy  
thought,

But either she, whom now I have, who now  
Divides with me that loved abode, was  
there,

Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps  
turned, 20

Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang;  
The thought of her was like a flash of light,  
Or an unseen companionship; a breath  
Or fragrance independent of the wind.

In all my goings, in the new and old  
Of all my meditations, and in this  
Favourite of all, in this the most of all. . . .

Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.  
Now in the clear and open day I feel 29

Your guardianship: I take it to my heart;  
'T is like the solemn shelter of the night.

But I would call thee beautiful; for mild  
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,  
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,  
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou  
art pleased,

Pleased with thy crags, and woody steepes,  
thy lake,

Its one green island, and its winding shores,  
The multitude of little rocky hills,  
Thy church, and cottages of mountain stone  
Clustered like stars some few, but single  
most, 40

And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks  
Like separated stars with clouds between.



## THE PRELUDE; OR, GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM

1799-1805. 1850

## ADVERTISEMENT

The following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the "Excursion," first published in 1814, where he thus speaks:—

"Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

"As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

"That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the 'Recluse;' as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the "Recluse," and that the "Recluse," if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone: viz. the "Excursion," was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the "Recluse" still remains in manuscript; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the "Excursion."

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings, on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country), are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the *Sibylline Leaves*, p. 197, ed. 1817, or *Poetical Works*, by S. T. Coleridge, vol. i. p. 206.

RYDAL MOUNT, July 13th, 1850.

## BOOK FIRST

INTRODUCTION — CHILDHOOD AND  
SCHOOL-TIME

Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze,  
A visitant that while it fans my cheek  
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings  
From the green fields, and from yon azure  
sky.

Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can  
come

To none more grateful than to me; escaped  
From the vast city, where I long had pined  
A discontented sojourner: now free,  
Free as a bird to settle where I will.

What dwelling shall receive me? in what  
vale

Shall be my harbour? underneath what grove

Shall I take up my home ? and what clear  
stream

Shall with its murmur lull me into rest ?  
The earth is all before me. With a heart  
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,  
I look about; and should the chosen guide  
Be nothing better than a wandering cloud,  
I cannot miss my way. I breathe again !  
Trances of thought and mountings of the  
mind

Come fast upon me: it is shaken off, 20  
That burthen of my own unnatural self,  
The heavy weight of many a weary day  
Not mine, and such as were not made for me.  
Long months of peace (if such bold word  
accord

With any promises of human life),  
Long months of ease and undisturbed de-  
light  
Are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn,  
By road or pathway, or through trackless  
field,  
Up hill or down, or shall some floating thing  
Upon the river point me out my course ? 30

Dear Liberty ! Yet what would it avail  
But for a gift that consecrates the joy ?  
For I, methought, while the sweet breath  
of heaven

Was blowing on my body, felt within  
A correspondent breeze, that gently moved  
With quickening virtue, but is now become  
A tempest, a redundant energy,  
Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,  
And their congenial powers, that, while they  
join

In breaking up a long-continued frost, 40  
Bring with them vernal promises, the hope  
Of active days urged on by flying hours, —  
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient  
thought

Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high,  
Matins and vespers of harmonious verse !

Thus far, O Friend ! did I, not used to  
make

A present joy the matter of a song,  
Pour forth that day my soul in measured  
strains

That would not be forgotten, and are here  
Recorded: to the open fields I told 50  
A prophecy: poetic numbers came  
Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe  
A renovated spirit singled out,  
Such hope was mine, for holy services.

My own voice cheered me, and, far more,  
the mind's

Internal echo of the imperfect sound;  
To both I listened, drawing from them both  
A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give  
A respite to this passion, I paced on 60  
With brisk and eager steps; and came, at  
length,

To a green shady place, where down I sate  
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by  
choice

And settling into gentler happiness.  
'T was autumn, and a clear and placid day,  
With warmth, as much as needed, from a  
sun

Two hours declined towards the west; a  
day

With silver clouds, and sunshine on the  
grass,

And in the sheltered and the sheltering grove  
A perfect stillness. Many were the thoughts  
Encouraged and dismissed, till choice was  
made 71

Of a known Vale, whither my feet should  
turn,

Nor rest till they had reached the very door  
Of the one cottage which methought I saw.

No picture of mere memory ever looked  
So fair; and while upon the fancied scene

I gazed with growing love, a higher power  
Than Fancy gave assurance of some work  
Of glory there forthwith to be begun,  
Perhaps too there performed. Thus long I  
mused, 80

Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,  
Save when, amid the stately grove of oaks,

Now here, now there, an acorn, from its cup  
Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or  
at once

To the bare earth dropped with a startling  
sound.

From that soft couch I rose not, till the sun  
Had almost touched the horizon; casting  
then

A backward glance upon the curling cloud  
Of city smoke, by distance ruralised;

Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive, 90  
But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,

Even with the chance equipment of that  
hour,

The road that pointed toward the chosen  
Vale.

It was a splendid evening, and my soul

Once more made trial of her strength, nor  
lacked

Æolian visitations; but the harp  
Was soon defrauded, and the banded host  
Of harmony dispersed in straggling sounds,  
And lastly utter silence! "Be it so; '99  
Why think of anything but present good?"  
So, like a home-bound labourer, I pursued  
My way beneath the mellowing sun, that  
shed

Mild influence; nor left in me one wish  
Again to bend the Sabbath of that time  
To a servile yoke. What need of many  
words?

A pleasant loitering journey, through three  
days

Continued, brought me to my hermitage.  
I spare to tell of what ensued, the life  
In common things — the endless store of  
things,

Rare, or at least so seeming, every day 110  
Found all about me in one neighbourhood —  
The self-congratulation, and, from morn  
To night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.  
But speedily an earnest longing rose  
To brace myself to some determined aim,  
Reading or thinking; either to lay up  
New stores, or rescue from decay the old  
By timely interference: and therewith  
Came hopes still higher, that with outward  
life

I might endue some airy phantasies 120  
That had been floating loose about for years,  
And to such beings temperately deal forth  
The many feelings that oppressed my heart.  
That hope hath been discouraged; welcome  
light

Dawns from the east, but dawns to disap-  
pear

And mock me with a sky that ripens not  
Into a steady morning: if my mind,  
Remembering the bold promise of the past,  
Would gladly grapple with some noble  
theme,

Vain is her wish; where'er she turns she  
finds 130

Impediments from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield up  
Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts  
Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend!  
The Poet, gentle creature as he is,  
Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times;  
His fits when he is neither sick nor well,  
Though no distress be near him but his own

Unmanageable thoughts: his mind, best  
pleased 139

While she as duteous as the mother dove  
Sits brooding, lives not always to that end,  
But like the innocent bird, hath goadings on  
That drive her as in trouble through the  
groves;

With me is now such passion, to be blamed  
No otherwise than as it lasts too long.

When, as becomes a man who would pre-  
pare

For such an arduous work, I through myself  
Make rigorous inquisition, the report  
Is often cheering; for I neither seem  
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,  
Nor general Truths, which are themselves  
a sort 151

Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,  
Subordinate helpers of the living mind:  
Nor am I naked of external things,  
Forms, images, nor numerous other aids  
Of less regard, though won perhaps with toil  
And needful to build up a Poet's praise.  
Time, place, and manners do I seek, and  
these

Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere  
such 159

As may be singled out with steady choice;  
No little band of yet remembered names  
Whom I, in perfect confidence, might hope  
To summon back from lonesome banish-  
ment,

And make them dwellers in the hearts of  
men

Now living, or to live in future years.  
Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice,  
mistaking

Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular  
sea,

Will settle on some British theme, some old  
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;  
More often turning to some gentle place  
Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe 171  
To shepherd swains, or seated harp in hand,  
Amid reposing knights by a river side  
Or fountain, listen to the grave reports  
Of dire enchantments faced and overcome  
By the strong mind, and tales of warlike  
feats,

Where spear encountered spear, and sword  
with sword

Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry  
That the shield bore, so glorious was the  
strife;

Whence inspiration for a song that winds  
Through ever-changing scenes of votive  
quest 181

Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid  
To patient courage and unblemished truth,  
To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,  
And Christian meekness hallowing faithful  
loves.

Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would  
relate

How vanquished Mithridates northward  
passed,

And, hidden in the cloud of years, became  
Odin, the Father of a race by whom  
Perished the Roman Empire: how the  
friends 190

And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain  
Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate Isles,  
And left their usages, their arts and laws,  
To disappear by a slow gradual death,  
To dwindle and to perish one by one,  
Starved in those narrow bounds: but not the  
soul

Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years  
Survived, and, when the European came  
With skill and power that might not be  
withstood,

Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold 200  
And wasted down by glorious death that  
race

Of natural heroes: or I would record  
How, in tyrannic times, some high-souled  
man,

Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,  
Suffered in silence for Truth's sake: or tell,  
How that one Frenchman, through contin-  
ued force

Of meditation on the inhuman deeds  
Of those who conquered first the Indian  
Isles,

Went single in his ministry across  
The Ocean; not to comfort the oppressed,  
But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about 211  
Withering the Oppressor: how Gustavus  
sought

Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines:  
How Wallace fought for Scotland; left the  
name

Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,  
All over his dear Country; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks,  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty. 220  
Sometimes it suits me better to invent

A tale from my own heart, more near  
akin

To my own passions and habitual thoughts;  
Some variegated story, in the main  
Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts  
Before the very sun that brightens it,  
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,  
My last and favourite aspiration, mounts  
With yearning toward some philosophic  
song

Of Truth that cherishes our daily life; 230  
With meditations passionate from deep  
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse  
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;  
But from this awful burthen I full soon  
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust  
That mellow years will bring a ripper  
mind

And clearer insight. Thus my days are past  
In contradiction; with no skill to part  
Vague longing, haply bred by want of  
power,

From paramount impulse not to be with-  
stood, 240

A timorous capacity, from prudence,  
From circumspection, infinite delay.  
Humility and modest awe, themselves  
Betray me, serving often for a cloak  
To a more subtle selfishness; that now  
Locks every function up in blank reserve,  
Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye  
That with intrusive restlessness beats off  
Simplicity and self-presented truth.  
Ah! better far than this, to stray about  
Voluptuously through fields and rural  
walks, 251

And ask no record of the hours, resigned  
To vacant musing, unproved neglect  
Of all things, and deliberate holiday.  
Far better never to have heard the name  
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live  
Baffled and plagued by a mind that every  
hour

Turns recreant to her task; takes heart  
again,  
Then feels immediately some hollow  
thought

Hang like an interdict upon her hopes. 260  
This is my lot; for either still I find  
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,  
Or see of absolute accomplishment  
Much wanting, so much wanting, in myself,  
That I recoil and droop, and seek repose  
In listlessness from vain perplexity,  
Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,

Like a false steward who hath much received  
And renders nothing back.

Was it for this  
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved <sup>270</sup>  
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,  
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,  
And from his fords and shallows, sent a  
voice  
That floated along my dreams? For this,  
didst thou,  
O Derwent! winding among grassy holms  
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,  
Make ceaseless music that composed my  
thoughts  
To more than infant softness, giving me  
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind  
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm <sup>280</sup>  
That Nature breathes among the hills and  
groves.

When he had left the mountains and received  
On his smooth breast the shadow of those  
towers  
That yet survive, a shattered monument  
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed  
Along the margin of our terrace walk;  
A tempting playmate whom we dearly  
loved.  
Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,  
In a small mill-race severed from his  
stream,  
Made one long bathing of a summer's  
day; <sup>290</sup>  
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked  
again  
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured  
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery  
groves  
Of yellow ragwort; or, when rock and hill,  
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty  
height,  
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood  
alone  
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born  
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut  
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport  
A naked savage, in the thunder shower. <sup>300</sup>

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew  
up  
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:  
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no  
less

In that beloved Vale to which ere long  
We were transplanted;—there were we  
let loose  
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told  
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain  
slopes  
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had  
snapped  
The last autumnal crocus, 't was my joy  
With store of springes o'er my shoulder  
hung <sup>310</sup>  
To range the open heights where wood-  
cocks run  
Along the smooth green turf. Through  
half the night,  
Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied  
That anxious visitation;—moon and stars  
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,  
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace  
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it  
befell  
In these night wanderings, that a strong  
desire  
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird  
Which was the captive of another's toil <sup>320</sup>  
Became my prey; and when the deed was  
done  
I heard among the solitary hills  
Low breathings coming after me, and  
sounds  
Of undistinguishable motion, steps  
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less, when spring had warmed the  
cultured Vale,  
Moved we as plunderers where the mother-  
bird  
Had in high places built her lodge; though  
mean  
Our object and inglorious, yet the end  
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have  
hung <sup>330</sup>  
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock  
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)  
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,  
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that  
time  
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,  
With what strange utterance did the loud  
dry wind  
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not  
a sky  
Of earth—and with what motion moved  
the clouds!

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit  
grows 340  
Like harmony in music; there is a dark  
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles  
Discordant elements, makes them cling to-  
gether  
In one society. How strange, that all  
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,  
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused  
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a  
part,  
And that a needful part, in making up  
The calm existence that is mine when I  
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!  
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned  
to employ; 351  
Whether her fearless visitings, or those  
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless  
light  
Opening the peaceful clouds; or she would  
use  
Severer interventions, ministry  
More palpal, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I  
found  
A little boat tied to a willow tree  
Within a rocky cove, its usual home.  
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping  
in 360  
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of  
stealth  
And troubled pleasure, nor without the  
voice  
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;  
Leaving behind her still, on either side,  
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,  
Until they melted all into one track  
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who  
rows,  
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point  
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view  
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge, 370  
The horizon's utmost boundary; far above  
Was nothing but the stars and the grey  
sky.  
She was an elfin pinnace; lustily  
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,  
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat  
Went heaving through the water like a  
swan;  
When, from behind that craggy steep till  
then  
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black  
and huge,

As if with voluntary power instinct,  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck  
again, 380  
And growing still in stature the grim shape  
Towered up between me and the stars, and  
still,  
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own  
And measured motion like a living thing,  
Strode after me. With trembling oars I  
turned,  
And through the silent water stole my way  
Back to the covert of the willow tree;  
There in her mooring-place I left my  
bark,—  
And through the meadows homeward went,  
in grave  
And serious mood; but after I had seen 390  
That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined  
sense  
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my  
thoughts  
There hung a darkness, call it solitude  
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes  
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,  
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;  
But huge and mighty forms, that do not  
live  
Like living men, moved slowly through the  
mind  
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe! 401  
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought  
That givest to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion, not in vain  
By day or star-light thus from my first  
dawn  
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human soul;  
Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
man,  
But with high objects, with enduring  
things—  
With life and nature — purifying thus 410  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying, by such discipline,  
Both pain and fear, until we recognise  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.  
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me  
With stinted kindness. In November days,  
When vapours rolling down the valley  
made  
A lonely scene more lonesome, among  
woods,

At noon and 'mid the calm of summer  
 nights,  
 When, by the margin of the trembling  
 lake,  
 Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I  
 went  
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine;  
 Mine was it in the fields both day and  
 night,  
 And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun  
 Was set, and visible for many a mile  
 The cottage windows blazed through twi-  
 light gloom,  
 I heeded not their summons: happy time  
 It was indeed for all of us — for me  
 It was a time of rapture! Clear and  
 loud  
 The village clock tolled six, — I wheeled  
 about,  
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
 That cares not for his home. All shod  
 with steel,  
 We hissed along the polished ice in games  
 Confederate, imitative of the chase  
 And woodland pleasures, — the resounding  
 horn,  
 The pack loud chiming, and the hunted  
 hare.  
 So through the darkness and the cold we  
 flew,  
 And not a voice was idle; with the din  
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;  
 The leafless trees and every icy crag  
 Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills  
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars  
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the  
 west  
 The orange sky of evening died away.  
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
 Into a silent bay, or sportively  
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
 throng,  
 To cut across the reflex of a star  
 That fled, and, flying still before me,  
 gleamed  
 Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,  
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
 And all the shadowy banks on either side  
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spin-  
 ning still  
 The rapid line of motion, then at once  
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,

Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs  
 Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had  
 rolled  
 With visible motion her diurnal round! 460  
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
 watched  
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky  
 And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!  
 And Souls of lonely places! can I think  
 A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed  
 Such ministry, when ye, through many a  
 year  
 Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,  
 On caves and trees, upon the woods and  
 hills,  
 Impressed, upon all forms, the characters 470  
 Of danger or desire; and thus did make  
 The surface of the universal earth,  
 With triumph and delight, with hope and  
 fear,  
 Work like a sea?

Not uselessly employed,  
 Might I pursue this theme through every  
 change  
 Of exercise and play, to which the year  
 Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew; the sun in heaven  
 Beheld not vales more beautiful than ours;  
 Nor saw a band in happiness and joy 481  
 Richer, or worthier of the ground they trod.  
 I could record with no reluctant voice  
 The woods of autumn, and their hazel  
 bowers  
 With milk-white clusters hung; the rod and  
 line,  
 True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose  
 strong  
 And unreprieved enchantment led us on  
 By rocks and pools shut out from every  
 star,  
 All the green summer, to forlorn cascades  
 Among the windings hid of mountain  
 brooks. 490

— Unfading recollections! at this hour  
 The heart is almost mine with which I felt,  
 From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,  
 The paper kite high among fleecy clouds  
 Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser;  
 Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,  
 Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly  
 Dashed headlong, and rejected by the storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,  
A ministration of your own was yours; 500  
Can I forget you, being as you were  
So beautiful among the pleasant fields  
In which ye stood? or can I here forget  
The plain and seemly countenance with  
which

Ye dealt out your plain comforts? Yet  
had ye

Delights and exultations of your own.  
Eager and never weary we pursued  
Our home-amusements by the warm peat-  
fire

At evening, when with pencil, and smooth  
slate

In square divisions parcelled out and all  
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled  
o'er, 511

We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to  
head

In strife too humble to be named in verse:  
Or round the naked table, snow-white deal,  
Cherry or maple, sate in close array,  
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on  
A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world,  
Neglected and ungratefully thrown by  
Even for the very service they had wrought,  
But husbanded through many a long cam-  
paign. 520

Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few  
Had changed their functions: some, ple-  
beian cards

Which Fate, beyond the promise of their  
birth,

Had dignified, and called to represent  
The persons of departed potentates.

Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell!  
Ironie diamonds, — clubs, hearts, diamonds,  
spades,

A congregation piteously akin!  
Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,  
Those sooty knaves, precipitated down 530  
With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of  
heaven:

The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,  
Queens gleaming through their splendour's  
last decay,

And monarchs surly at the wrongs sus-  
tained

By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad  
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost  
Raged bitterly, with keen and silent tooth;  
And, interrupting oft that eager game,  
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of  
ice

The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,  
Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a  
loud 541  
Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves  
Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace  
How Nature by extrinsic passion first  
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or  
fair,

And made me love them, may I here omit  
How other pleasures have been mine, and  
joys

Of subtler origin; how I have felt,  
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,  
Those hallowed and pure motions of the  
sense 551

Which seem, in their simplicity, to own  
An intellectual charm; that calm delight  
Which, if I err not, surely must belong  
To those first-born affinities that fit  
Our new existence to existing things,  
And, in our dawn of being, constitute  
The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful  
earth,

And twice five summers on my mind had  
stamped 560

The faces of the moving year, even then  
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty  
Old as creation, drinking in a pure  
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths  
Of curling mist, or from the level plain  
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks  
and bays

Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell  
How, when the Sea threw off his evening  
shade,

And to the shepherd's hut on distant  
hills 570

Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,  
How I have stood, to fancies such as these

A stranger, linking with the spectacle  
No conscious memory of a kindred sight,  
And bringing with me no peculiar sense  
Of quietness or peace; yet have I stood,  
Even while mine eye hath moved o'er many  
a league

Of shining water, gathering as it seemed,  
Through every hair-breadth in that field of  
light,

New pleasure like a bee among the flowers.



Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy <sup>581</sup>  
Which, through all seasons, on a child's  
pursuits

Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy  
bliss

Which, like a tempest, works along the  
blood

And is forgotten; even then I felt  
Gleams like the flashing of a shield; — the  
earth

And common face of Nature spake to me  
Rememberable things; sometimes, 't is true,  
By chance collisions and quaint accidents  
(Like those ill-sorted unions, work supposed  
Of evil-minded fairies), yet not vain <sup>591</sup>

Nor profitless, if haply they impressed  
Collateral objects and appearances,  
Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep  
Until maturer seasons called them forth  
To impregnate and to elevate the mind.

— And if the vulgar joy by its own weight  
Wearied itself out of the memory,  
The scenes which were a witness of that joy  
Remained in their substantial lineaments  
Depicted on the brain, and to the eye <sup>601</sup>

Were visible, a daily sight; and thus  
By the impressive discipline of fear,  
By pleasure and repeated happiness,  
So frequently repeated, and by force  
Of obscure feelings representative  
Of things forgotten, these same scenes so  
bright,

So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,  
Though yet the day was distant, did be-  
come

Habitually dear, and all their forms <sup>610</sup>  
And changeful colours by invisible links  
Were fastened to the affections.

I began

My story early — not misled, I trust,  
By an infirmity of love for days  
Disowned by memory — ere the breath of  
spring

Planting my snowdrops among winter  
snows:

Nor will it seem to thee, O Friend! so  
prompt

In sympathy, that I have lengthened out  
With fond and feeble tongue a tedious tale.  
Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I might  
fetch <sup>620</sup>

Invigorating thoughts from former years;  
Might fix the wavering balance of my mind,  
And haply meet reproaches too, whose  
power

May spur me on, in manhood now mature  
To honourable toil. Yet should these hopes  
Prove vain, and thus should neither I be  
taught

To understand myself, nor thou to know  
With better knowledge how the heart was  
framed

Of him thou lovest; need I dread from thee  
Harsh judgments, if the song be loth to quit  
Those recollected hours that have the charm  
Of visionary things, those lovely forms <sup>632</sup>  
And sweet sensations that throw back our  
life,

And almost make remotest infancy  
A visible scene, on which the sun is shining?

One end at least hath been attained; my  
mind

Hath been revived, and if this genial mood  
Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought  
down

Through later years the story of my life.  
The road lies plain before me; — 't is a  
theme <sup>640</sup>

Single and of determined bounds; and  
hence

I choose it rather at this time, than work  
Of ampler or more varied argument,  
Where I might be discomfited and lost:  
And certain hopes are with me, that to thee  
This labour will be welcome, honoured  
Friend!

## BOOK SECOND

### SCHOOL-TIME (*continued*)

THUS far, O Friend! have we, though  
leaving much

Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace  
The simple ways in which my childhood  
walked;

Those chiefly that first led me to the love  
Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion yet  
Was in its birth, sustained as might befall  
By nourishment that came unsought; for  
still

From week to week, from month to month,  
we lived

A round of tumult. Duly were our games  
Prolonged in summer till the daylight failed;  
No chair remained before the doors; the  
bench <sup>11</sup>

And threshold steps were empty; fast asleep  
The labourer, and the old man who had sate

A later lingerer; yet the revelry  
Continued and the loud uproar: at last,  
When all the ground was dark, and twin-  
    kling stars  
Edged the black clouds, home and to bed  
    we went,  
Feverish with weary joints and beating  
    minds.

Ah! is there one who ever has been young,  
Nor needs a warning voice to tame the  
    pride

Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem? 20  
One is there, though the wisest and the best  
Of all mankind, who covets not at times  
Union that cannot be; — who would not give  
If so he might, to duty and to truth  
The eagerness of infantine desire?

A tranquillising spirit presses now  
On my corporeal frame, so wide appears  
The vacancy between me and those days  
Which yet have such self-presence in my  
    mind, 30

That, musing on them, often do I seem  
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself  
And of some other Being. A rude mass  
Of native rock, left midway in the square  
Of our small market village, was the goal  
Or centre of these sports; and when, re-  
    turned

After long absence, thither I repaired,  
Gone was the old grey stone, and in its place  
A smart Assembly-room usurped the ground  
That had been ours. There let the fiddle  
    scream, 40

And be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I  
    know

That more than one of you will think with  
    me

Of those soft starry nights, and that old  
    Dame

From whom the stone was named, who  
    there had sat,

And watched her table with its luckster's  
    wares

Assiduous, through the length of sixty years.

We ran a boisterous course; the year  
    span round

With giddy motion. But the time ap-  
    proached

That brought with it a regular desire  
For calmer pleasures, when the winning  
    forms 50

Of Nature were collaterally attached  
To every scheme of holiday delight

And every boyish sport, less grateful else  
And languidly pursued.

When summer came,  
Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,  
To sweep along the plain of Windermere  
With rival oars; and the selected bourn  
Was now an Island musical with birds  
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle  
Beneath the oaks' unbrageous covert, sown  
With lilies of the valley like a field; 61  
And now a third small Island, where sur-  
    vived

In solitude the ruins of a shrine  
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served  
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race  
So ended, disappointment could be none,  
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:  
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,  
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride  
    of strength,

And the vain-glory of superior skill, 70  
Were tempered; thus was gradually pro-  
    duced

A quiet independence of the heart:  
And to my Friend who knows me I may  
    add,

Fearless of blame, that hence for future days  
Ensued a diffidence and modesty,  
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much,  
The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine fare!  
More than we wished we knew the blessing  
    then

Of vigorous hunger — hence corporeal  
    strength 80

Unsapped by delicate viands; for, exclude  
A little weekly stipend, and we lived

Through three divisions of the quartered  
    year

In penniless poverty. But now to school  
From the half-yearly holidays returned,

We came with weightier purses, that suf-  
    ficed

To furnish treats more costly than the  
    Dame

Of the old grey stone, from her scant board,  
    supplied.

Hence rustic dinners on the cool green  
    ground,

Or in the woods, or by a river side 90

Or shady fountains, while among the leaves  
Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day sun  
Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.

Nor is my aim neglected if I tell

How sometimes, in the length of those half-  
years,  
We from our funds drew largely; — proud  
to our b,  
And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;  
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose  
stud  
Supplied our want, we haply might employ  
Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound 100  
Were distant: some famed temple where  
of yore  
The Druids worshipped, or the antique  
walls  
Of that large abbey, where within the Vale  
Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour built,  
Stands yet a mouldering pile with fractured  
arch,  
Belfry, and images, and living trees;  
A holy scene! — Along the smooth green  
turf  
Our horses grazed. To more than inland  
peace,  
Left by the west wind sweeping overhead  
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and tow-  
ers 110  
In that sequestered valley may be seen,  
Both silent and both motionless alike;  
Such the deep shelter that is there, and  
such  
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the sunnons  
given,  
With whip and spur we through the chaun-  
try flew  
In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged  
knight,  
And the stone-abbot, and that single wren  
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave  
Of the old church, that — though from re-  
cent showers 120  
The earth was comfortless, and, touched  
by faint  
Internal breezes, sobbings of the place  
And respirations, from the roofless walls  
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops —  
yet still  
So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible  
bird  
Sang to herself, that there I could have  
made  
My dwelling-place, and lived for ever there  
To hear such music. Through the walls  
we flew  
And down the valley, and, a circuit made

In wantonness of heart, through rough and  
smooth 130  
We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks  
and streams,  
And that still spirit shed from evening air!  
Even in this joyous time I sometimes felt  
Your presence, when with slackened step  
we breathed  
Along the sides of the steep hills, or when  
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the  
sea  
We beat with thundering hoofs the level  
sand.

Midway on long Winander's eastern  
shore,  
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,  
A tavern stood; no homely-featured  
house, 140  
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,  
But 't was a splendid place, the door beset  
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and  
within  
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.  
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was  
built  
On the large island, had this dwelling been  
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,  
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore  
shade.  
But — though the rhymes were gone that  
once inscribed  
The threshold, and large golden charac-  
ters, 150  
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had  
dislodged  
The old Lion and usurped his place, in  
slight  
And mockery of the rustic painter's hand —  
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear  
With all its foolish pomp. The garden lay  
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain  
Of a small bowling-green; beneath us  
stood  
A grove, with gleams of water through the  
trees  
And over the tree-tops; nor did we want  
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow  
cream. 160  
There, while through half an afternoon we  
played  
On the smooth platform, whether skill pre-  
vailed  
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of  
glee

Made all the mountains ring. But, ere  
night-fall,

When in our pinnacle we returned at lei-  
sure

Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach  
Of some small island steered our course  
with one,

The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him  
there,

And rowed off gently, while he blew his  
flute

Alone upon the rock — oh, then, the calm  
And dead still water lay upon my mind 171  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the  
sky,

Never before so beautiful, sank down  
Into my heart, and held me like a dream !  
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and  
thus

Daily the common range of visible things  
Grew dear to me: already I began

To love the sun; a boy I loved the sun,  
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge  
And surety of our earthly life, a light 180

Which we behold and feel we are alive;  
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds —  
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay  
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen  
The western mountain touch his setting  
orb,

In many a thoughtless hour, when, from  
excess

Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow  
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with  
joy.

And, from like feelings, humble though in-  
tense,

To patriotic and domestic love 190  
Analogous, the moon to me was dear;

For I could dream away my purposes,  
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung  
Midway between the hills as if she knew  
No other region, but belonged to thee,  
Yea, appertained by a peculiar right  
To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear  
Vale !

Those incidental charms which first at-  
tached

My heart to rural objects, day by day  
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell 200  
How Nature, intervenient till this time  
And secondary, now at length was sought  
For her own sake. But who shall parcel  
out

His intellect by geometric rules,  
Split like a province into round and square ?  
Who knows the individual hour in which  
His habits were first sown, even as a seed ?  
Who that shall point as with a wand and  
say

“This portion of the river of my mind  
Came from yon fountain ?” Thou, my  
Friend ! art one 210  
More deeply read in thy own thoughts; to  
thee

Science appears but what in truth she is,  
Not as our glory and our absolute boast,  
But as a succedaneum, and a prop  
To our infirmity. No officious slave  
Art thou of that false secondary power  
By which we multiply distinctions, then  
Deem that our puny boundaries are things  
That we perceive, and not that we have  
made.

To thee, unblinded by these formal arts, 220  
The unity of all hath been revealed,  
And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly  
skilled

Than many are to range the faculties  
In scale and order, class the cabinet  
Of their sensations, and in voluble phrase  
Run through the history and birth of each  
As of a single independent thing.

Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the mind,  
If each most obvious and particular  
thought,

Not in a mystical and idle sense, 230  
But in the words of Reason deeply weighed,  
Hath no beginning.

Blest the infant Babe,  
(For with my best conjecture I would trace  
Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the  
Babe,

Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks to  
sleep

Rocked on his Mother's breast; who with  
his soul

Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye !  
For him, in one dear Presence, there exists  
A virtue which irradiates and exalts  
Objects through widest intercourse of  
sense; 240

No outcast he, bewildered and depressed:  
Along his infant veins are interfused  
The gravitation and the filial bond  
Of nature that connect him with the world.  
Is there a flower, to which he points with  
hand

Too weak to gather it, already love

Drawn from love's purest earthly fount for  
him

Hath beautified that flower; already shades  
Of pity cast from inward tenderness  
Do fall around him upon aught that  
bears 250

Unsignificantly marks of violence or harm.  
Emphatically such a Being lives,  
Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,  
An inmate of this active universe:  
For, feeling has to him imparted power  
That through the growing faculties of sense  
Doth like an agent of the one great Mind  
Create, creator and receiver both,  
Working but in alliance with the works  
Which it beholds. — Such, verily, is the first  
Poetic spirit of our human life, 261  
By uniform control of after years,  
In most, abated or suppressed; in some,  
Through every change of growth and of  
decay,  
Pre-eminent till death.

From early days,  
Beginning not long after that first time  
In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch  
I held mute dialogues with my Mother's  
heart,

I have endeavoured to display the means  
Whereby this infant sensibility, 270  
Great birthright of our being, was in me  
Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path  
More difficult before me; and I fear  
That in its broken windings we shall need  
The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's wing:  
For now a trouble came into my mind  
From unknown causes. I was left alone  
Seeking the visible world, nor knowing why.  
The props of my affections were removed,  
And yet the building stood, as if sustained  
By its own spirit! All that I beheld 281  
Was dear, and hence to finer influxes  
The mind lay open to a more exact  
And close communion. Many are our joys  
In youth, but oh! what happiness to live  
When every hour brings palpable access  
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is de-  
light,

And sorrow is not there! The seasons came,  
And every season wheresoe'er I moved 290  
Unfolded transitory qualities,  
Which, but for this most watchful power of  
love,

Had been neglected; left a register  
Of permanent relations, else unknown.  
Hence life, and change, and beauty, solitude

More active ever than "best society" —  
Society made sweet as solitude  
By silent inobtrusive sympathies,  
And gentle agitations of the mind  
From manifold distinctions, difference  
Perceived in things, where, to the unwatch-  
ful eye, 300

No difference is, and hence, from the same  
source,

Sublimar joy; for I would walk alone,  
Under the quiet stars, and at that time  
Have felt whate'er there is of power in  
sound

To breathe an elevated mood, by form  
Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,  
If the night blackened with a coming storm,  
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that  
are

The ghostly language of the ancient earth,  
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.  
Thence did I drink the visionary power; 311  
And deem not profitless those fleeting moods  
Of shadowy exultation: not for this,  
That they are kindred to our purer mind  
And intellectual life; but that the soul,  
Remembering how she felt, but what she  
felt

Remembering not, retains an obscure sense  
Of possible sublimity, whereto  
With growing faculties she doth aspire, 319  
With faculties still growing, feeling still  
That whatsoever point they gain, they yet  
Have something to pursue.

And not alone,  
'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid fair  
And tranquil scenes, that universal power  
And fitness in the latent qualities  
And essences of things, by which the mind  
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me  
Came strengthened with a superadded soul,  
A virtue not its own. My morning walks  
Were early; — oft before the hours of  
school 330

I travelled round our little lake, five miles  
Of pleasant wandering. Happy time! more  
dear

For this, that one was by my side, a Friend,  
Then passionately loved; with heart how  
full

Would he peruse these lines! For many  
years

Have since flowed in between us, and, our  
minds

Both silent to each other, at this time  
We live as if those hours had never been.

Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch 339  
 Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had risen  
 From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush  
 Was audible; and sate among the woods  
 Alone upon some jutting eminence,  
 At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the  
 Vale,

Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.  
 How shall I seek the origin? where find  
 Faith in the marvellous things which then I  
 felt?

Oft in these moments such a holy calm  
 Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes  
 Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw 350  
 Appeared like something in myself, a dream,  
 A prospect in the mind.

"T were long to tell  
 What spring and autumn, what the winter  
 snows,

And what the summer shade, what day and  
 night,  
 Evening and morning, sleep and waking,  
 thought

From sources inexhaustible, poured forth  
 To feed the spirit of religious love  
 In which I walked with Nature. But let  
 this

Be not forgotten, that I still retained  
 My first creative sensibility; 360  
 That by the regular action of the world  
 My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power  
 Abode with me; a forming hand, at times  
 Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;  
 A local spirit of his own, at war  
 With general tendency, but, for the most,  
 Subservient strictly to external things  
 With which it communed. An auxiliar light  
 Came from my mind, which on the setting  
 sun

Bestowed new splendour; the melodious  
 birds, 370

The fluttering breezes, fountains that run on  
 Murmuring so sweetly in themselves,  
 obeyed

A like dominion, and the midnight storm  
 Grew darker in the presence of my eye;  
 Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,  
 And hence my transport.

Nor should this, perchance,  
 Pass unrecorded, that I still had loved  
 The exercise and produce of a toil,  
 Than analytic industry to me  
 More pleasing, and whose character I deem  
 Is more poetic as resembling more 381  
 Creative agency. The song would speak

Of that interminable building reared  
 By observation of affinities  
 In objects where no brotherhood exists  
 To passive minds. My seventeenth year  
 was come

And, whether from this habit rooted now  
 So deeply in my mind, or from excess  
 In the great social principle of life  
 Coercing all things into sympathy, 390  
 To unorganic natures were transferred  
 My own enjoyments; or the power of truth  
 Coming in revelation, did converse  
 With things that really are; I, at this time,  
 Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.  
 Thus while the days flew by, and years  
 passed on,

From Nature and her overflowing soul,  
 I had received so much, that all my  
 thoughts

Were steeped in feeling; I was only then  
 Contented, when with bliss ineffable 400  
 I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
 O'er all that moves and all that seemeth  
 still;

O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of  
 thought

And human knowledge, to the human eye  
 Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;  
 O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and  
 sings,  
 Or beats the glad some air; o'er all that  
 glides

Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,  
 And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not  
 If high the transport, great the joy I felt,  
 Communing in this sort through earth and  
 heaven 411

With every form of creature, as it looked  
 Towards the Uncreated with a countenance  
 Of adoration, with an eye of love.  
 One song they sang, and it was audible,  
 Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,  
 O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,  
 Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith  
 Find easier access to the pious mind, 420  
 Yet were I grossly destitute of all  
 Those human sentiments that make this  
 earth

So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice  
 To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes  
 And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds  
 That dwell among the hills where I was  
 born.

If in my youth I have been pure in heart,  
If, mingling with the world, I am content  
With my own modest pleasures, and have  
lived

With God and Nature communing, re-  
moved 430

From little enmities and low desires —  
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,  
This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,  
If, 'mid indifference and apathy,  
And wicked exultation when good men  
On every side fall off, we know not how,  
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names  
Of peace and quiet and domestic love  
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers  
On visionary minds; if, in this time 440  
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet  
Despair not of our nature, but retain  
A more than Roman confidence, a faith  
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,  
The blessing of my life — the gift is yours,  
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 't is yours,  
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast  
fed

My lofty speculations; and in thee,  
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find  
A never-failing principle of joy 450  
And purest passion.

Thou, my Friend! wert reared  
In the great city, 'mid far other scenes;  
But we, by different roads, at length have  
gained  
The selfsame bourne. And for this cause  
to thee

I speak, unapprehensive of contempt,  
The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,  
And all that silent language which so oft  
In conversation between man and man  
Blots from the human countenance all trace  
Of beauty and of love. For thou hast  
sought 460

The truth in solitude, and, since the days  
That gave thee liberty, full long desired,  
To serve in Nature's temple, thou hast  
been

The most assiduous of her ministers;  
In many things my brother, chiefly here  
In this our deep devotion.

Fare thee well!

Health and the quiet of a healthful mind  
Attend thee! seeking oft the haunts of  
men,

And yet more often living with thyself,  
And for thyself, so haply shall thy days 470  
Be many, and a blessing to mankind.

### BOOK THIRD

#### RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE

It was a dreary morning when the wheels  
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with  
clouds,

And nothing cheered our way till first we  
saw

The long-roofed chapel of King's College  
lift

Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,  
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road  
A student clothed in gown and tasselled  
cap,

Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,  
Or covetous of exercise and air; 10

He passed — nor was I master of my eyes  
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.

As near and nearer to the spot we drew,  
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's  
force.

Onward we drove beneath the Castle; caught,  
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse  
of Cam;

And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full  
of hope;

Some friends I had, acquaintances who there  
Seemed friends, poor simple schoolboys, now  
hung round 20

With honour and importance: in a world  
Of welcome faces up and down I roved;  
Questions, directions, warnings and advice,  
Flowed in upon me, from all sides; fresh  
day

Of pride and pleasure! to myself I seemed  
A man of business and expense, and went  
From shop to shop about my own affairs,  
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,  
From street to street with loose and careless  
mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream; I  
roamed 30

Delighted through the motley spectacle;  
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students,  
streets,

Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gate-  
ways, towers:

Migration strange for a stripling of the  
hills,

A northern villager.

As if the change  
Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once  
Behold me rich in monies, and attired  
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and  
hair  
Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is  
keen.

My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by, 40  
With other signs of manhood that supplied  
The lack of beard. — The weeks went  
roundly on,

With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,  
Smooth housekeeping within, and all with-  
out

Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was:  
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first  
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure;  
Right underneath, the College kitchens  
made

A humming sound, less tuneable than  
bees, 50  
But hardly less industrious; with shrill  
notes

Of sharp command and scolding inter-  
mixed.

Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,  
Who never let the quarters, night or day,  
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the  
hours

Twice over with a male and female voice.  
Her pealing organ was my neighbour too;  
And from my pillow, looking forth by light  
Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold  
The antechapel where the statue stood 60  
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,  
The marble index of a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought,  
alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's  
room  
All stood round, as thick as chairs could  
stand,

With loyal students, faithful to their books,  
Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,  
And honest dunces — of important days,  
Examinations, when the man was weighed  
As in a balance! of excessive hopes, 70  
Tremblings withal and commendable fears,  
Small jealousies, and triumphs good or  
bad —

Let others that know more speak as they  
know.

Such glory was but little sought by me,  
And little won. Yet from the first crude  
days

Of settling time in this untried abode,  
I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,  
Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears  
About my future worldly maintenance,  
And, more than all, a strangeness in the  
mind, 80

A feeling that I was not for that hour,  
Nor for that place. But wherefore be cast  
down?

For (not to speak of Reason and her pure  
Reflective acts to fix the moral law  
Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian  
Hope,

Bowing her head before her sister Faith  
As one far mightier), hither I had come,  
Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy  
powers

And faculties, whether to work or feel.  
Oft when the dazzling show no longer new  
Had ceased to dazzle, oftentimes did I quit 90  
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings  
and groves,

And as I paced alone the level fields  
Far from those lovely sights and sounds  
sublime

With which I had been conversant, the  
mind

Drooped not; but there into herself return-  
ing,

With prompt rebound seemed fresh as here-  
tofore.

At least I more distinctly recognised  
Her native instincts: let me dare to speak  
A higher language, say that now I felt 100  
What independent solaces were mine,  
To mitigate the injurious sway of place  
Or circumstance, how far soever changed  
In youth, or to be changed in after years.  
As if awakened, summoned, roused, con-  
strained,

I looked for universal things; perused  
The common countenance of earth and sky:  
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace  
Of that first Paradise whence man was  
driven;

And sky, whose beauty and bounty are ex-  
pressed 110

By the proud name she bears — the name  
of Heaven.

I called on both to teach me what they  
might;

Or, turning the mind in upon herself,



Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread  
my thoughts  
And spread them with a wider creeping;  
felt

Incumbencies more awful, visitings  
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,  
That tolerates the indignities of Time,  
And, from the centre of Eternity  
All finite motions overruling, lives <sup>120</sup>  
In glory immutable. But peace! enough  
Here to record that I was mounting now  
To such community with highest truth —  
A track pursuing, not untrod before,  
From strict analogies by thought supplied  
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.  
To every natural form, rock, fruits, or  
flower,

Even the loose stones that cover the high-  
way,  
I gave a moral life: I saw them feel,  
Or linked them to some feeling: the great  
mass <sup>130</sup>

Lay imbedded in a quickening soul, and all  
That I beheld respired with inward mean-  
ing.

Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love  
Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on  
From transitory passion, unto this  
I was as sensitive as waters are  
To the sky's influence in a kindred mood  
Of passion; was obedient as a lute  
That waits upon the touches of the wind.  
Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most  
rich — <sup>140</sup>

I had a world about me — 't was my own;  
I made it, for it only lived to me,  
And to the God who sees into the heart.  
Such sympathies, though rarely, were be-  
trayed

By outward gestures and by visible looks:  
Some called it madness — so indeed it was,  
If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,  
If steady moods of thoughtfulness matured  
To inspiration, sort with such a name;  
If prophecy be madness; if things  
viewed <sup>150</sup>

By poets in old time, and higher up  
By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,  
May in these tutored days no more be seen  
With undisordered sight. But leaving  
this,

It was no madness, for the bodily eye  
Amid my strongest workings evermore  
Was searching out the lines of difference  
As they lie hid in all external forms,

Near or remote, minute or vast; an eye  
Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered  
leaf, <sup>160</sup>

To the broad ocean and the azure heavens  
Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars,  
Could find no surface where its power  
might sleep;

Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,  
And by an unrelenting agency  
Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend! have I retraced  
my life

Up to an eminence, and told a tale  
Of matters which not falsely may be called  
The glory of my youth. Of genius,  
power, <sup>170</sup>

Creation and divinity itself  
I have been speaking, for my theme has  
been

What has passed within me. Not of out-  
ward things

Done visibly for other minds, words, signs,  
Symbols or actions, but of my own heart  
Have I been speaking, and my youthful  
mind.

O Heavens! how awful is the might of  
souls,

And what they do within themselves while  
yet

The yoke of earth is new to them, the  
world

Nothing but a wild field where they were  
sown. <sup>180</sup>

This is, in truth, heroic argument,  
This genuine prowess, which I wished to  
touch

With hand however weak, but in the main  
It lies far hidden from the reach of words.  
Points have we all of us within our souls  
Where all stand single; this I feel, and  
make

Breathings for incommunicable powers;  
But is not each a memory to himself,  
And, therefore, now that we must quit this  
theme,

I am not heartless, for there's not a  
man <sup>190</sup>

That lives who hath not known his god-  
like hours,

And feels not what an empire we inherit  
As natural beings in the strength of Nature.

No more: for now into a populous plain  
We must descend. A Traveller I am,

Whose tale is only of himself; even so,  
So be it, if the pure of heart be prompt  
To follow, and if thou, my honoured  
Friend!

Who in these thoughts art ever at my side,  
Support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first del-  
light<sup>201</sup>  
That flashed upon me from this novel show  
Had failed, the mind returned into her-  
self;

Yet true it is, that I had made a change  
In climate, and my nature's outward coat  
Changed also slowly and insensibly.  
Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts  
Of loneliness gave way to empty noise  
And superficial pastimes; now and then  
Forced labour, and more frequently forced  
hopes;<sup>210</sup>

And, worst of all, a treasonable growth  
Of indecisive judgments, that impaired  
And shook the mind's simplicity. — And  
yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I be-  
hold —

Who, less insensible than sodden clay  
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,  
Could have beheld — with undelighted  
heart,

So many happy youths, so wide and fair  
A congregation in its budding-time  
Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at  
once<sup>210</sup>

So many divers samples from the growth  
Of life's sweet season — could have seen  
unmoved

That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers  
Decking the matron temples of a place  
So famous through the world? To me, at  
least,

It was a goodly prospect: for, in sooth,  
Though I had learnt betimes to stand un-  
proped,

And independent musings pleased me so  
That spells seemed on me when I was alone,  
Yet could I only cleave to solitude<sup>230</sup>  
In lonely places; if a throng was near  
That way I leaned by nature; for my heart  
Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might participate  
My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once,  
Though not unused to mutter lonesome  
songs,

Even with myself divided such delight,  
Or looked that way for aught that might  
be clothed

In human language), easily I passed  
From the remembrances of better things,<sup>240</sup>  
And slipped into the ordinary works  
Of careless youth, unburthened, unalarmed.  
*Caverns* there were within my mind which  
sun

Could never penetrate, yet did there not  
Want store of leafy *arbours* where the light  
Might enter in at will. Companionships,  
Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome  
all.

We sauntered, played, or rioted; we talked  
Unprofitable talk at morning hours;  
Drifted about along the streets and  
walks,<sup>250</sup>

Read lazily in trivial books, went forth<sup>4</sup>  
To gallop through the country in blind zeal  
Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast  
Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the  
stars

Come forth, perhaps without one quiet  
thought.

Such was the tenor of the second act  
In this new life. Imagination slept,  
And yet not utterly. I could not print  
Ground where the grass had yielded to the  
steps

Of generations of illustrious men,<sup>260</sup>  
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass  
Through the same gateways, sleep where  
they had slept,

Wake where they waked, range that in-  
closure old,

That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.  
Place also by the side of this dark sense  
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men,  
Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,  
Seemed humbled in these precincts, thence  
to be

The more endeared. Their several memo-  
ries here

(Even like their persons in their portraits  
clothed<sup>270</sup>

With the accustomed garb of daily life)  
Put on a lowly and a touching grace  
Of more distinct humanity, that left  
All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington  
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn  
shade;

Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell  
his tales

Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,  
Chosen by the Muses for their Page of  
State —

Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded  
heaven <sup>280</sup>

With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft  
pace,

I called him Brother, Englishman, and  
Friend !

Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,  
Stood almost single; uttering odious truth —  
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,  
Soul awful — if the earth has ever lodged  
An awful soul — I seemed to see him here  
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress

Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth —  
A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks <sup>290</sup>

Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,  
And conscious step of purity and pride.

Among the band of my compeers was one  
Whom chance had stationed in the very  
room

Honoured by Milton's name. O temperate  
Bard !

Be it confest that, for the first time, seated  
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,

One of a festive circle, I poured out  
Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride

And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain <sup>300</sup>  
Never excited by the fumes of wine

Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I  
ran

From the assembly; through a length of  
streets,

Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel door  
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,

Albeit long after the importunate bell  
Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra  
voice

No longer haunting the dark winter night.  
Call back, O Friend ! a moment to thy mind,

The place itself and fashion of the rites. <sup>310</sup>  
With careless ostentation shouldering up

My surplice, through the inferior throng I  
clove

Of the plain Burghers, who in audience  
stood

On the last skirts of their permitted ground,  
Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts !

I am ashamed of them : and that great Bard,  
And thou, O Friend ! who in thy ample  
mind

Hast placed me high above my best deserts,

Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,  
In some of its unworthy vanities, <sup>320</sup>  
Brother to many more.

In this mixed sort  
The months passed on, remissly, not given  
up

To wilful alienation from the right,  
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague

And loose indifference, easy likings, aims  
Of a low pitch — duty and zeal dismissed,

Yet Nature, or a happy course of things  
Not doing in their stead the needful work.

The memory languidly revolved, the heart  
Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse

Of contemplation almost failed to beat. <sup>331</sup>  
Such life might not inaptly be compared

To a floating island, an amphibious spot  
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal

Not wanting a fair face of water weeds  
And pleasant flowers. The thirst of living

praise,  
Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, the  
sight

Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,  
Where mighty *minds* lie visibly entombed,

Have often stirred the heart of youth, and  
bred <sup>340</sup>

A fervent love of rigorous discipline. —  
Alas ! such high emotion touched not me.

Look was there none within these walls to  
shame

My easy spirits, and discountenance  
Their light composure, far less to instil

A calm resolve of mind, firmly addressed  
To puissant efforts. Nor was this the blame

Of others but my own; I should, in truth,  
As far as doth concern my single self, <sup>349</sup>

Misdeem most widely, lodging it elsewhere:  
For I, bred up 'mid Nature's luxuries,

Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like the  
wind,

As I had done in daily intercourse  
With those crystalline rivers, solemn

heights,  
And mountains, ranging like a fowl of the

air,  
I was ill-tutored for captivity;

To quit my pleasure, and, from month to  
month,

Take up a station calmly on the perch  
Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms

Had also left less space within my mind,  
Which, wrought upon instinctively, had

found <sup>361</sup>  
A freshness in those objects of her love,

A winning power, beyond all other power.  
Not that I slighted books, — that were to  
lack

All sense, — but other passions in me ruled,  
Passions more fervent, making me less  
prompt

To in-door study than was wise or well,  
Or suited to those years. Yet I, though  
used

In magisterial liberty to rove,  
Culling such flowers of learning as might  
tempt 370

A random choice, could shadow forth a  
place

(If now I yield not to a flattering dream)  
Whose studious aspect should have bent me  
down

To instantaneous service; should at once  
Have made me pay to science and to arts  
And written lore, acknowledged my liege  
lord,

A homage frankly offered up, like that  
Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and  
pains

In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built,  
Should spread from heart to heart; and  
stately groves, 380

Majestic edifices, should not want  
A corresponding dignity within.

The congregating temper that pervades  
Our unripe years, not wasted, should be  
taught

To minister to works of high attempt —  
Works which the enthusiast would perform  
with love.

Youth should be awed, religiously possessed  
With a conviction of the power that waits  
On knowledge, when sincerely sought and  
prized 389

For its own sake, on glory and on praise  
If but by labour won, and fit to endure  
The passing day; should learn to put aside  
Her trappings here, should strip them off  
abashed

Before antiquity and steadfast truth  
And strong book-mindedness; and over all  
A healthy sound simplicity should reign,  
A seemly plainness, name it what you will,  
Republican or pious.

If these thoughts

Are a gratuitous emblazonry  
That mocks the recreant age we live in,  
then 400  
Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect  
Whatever formal gait of discipline

Shall raise them highest in their own es-  
teem —

Let them parade among the Schools at will,  
But spare the House of God. Was ever  
known

The witless shepherd who persists to drive  
A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked?  
A weight must surely hang on days begun  
And ended with such mockery. Be wise,  
Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the spirit  
Of ancient times revive, and youth be  
trained 411

At home in pious service, to your bells  
Give seasonable rest, for 't is a sound  
Hollow as ever vexed the tranquil air;  
And your officious doings bring disgrace  
On the plain steeples of our English Church,  
Whose worship, mid remotest village trees,  
Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at hand  
In daily sight of this irreverence,  
Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,  
Loses her just authority, falls beneath 421  
Collateral suspicion, else unknown.

This truth escaped me not, and I confess,  
That having 'mid my native hills given loose  
To a schoolboy's vision, I had raised a pile  
Upon the basis of the coming time,  
That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what joy  
To see a sanctuary for our country's youth  
Informed with such a spirit as might be  
Its own protection, a primeval grove, 430  
Where, though the shades with cheerfulness  
were filled,

Nor indigent of songs warbled from crowds  
In under-coverts, yet the countenance  
Of the whole place should bear a stamp of  
awe;

A habitation sober and demure  
For ruminating creatures; a domain  
For quiet things to wander in; a haunt  
In which the heron should delight to feed  
By the shy rivers, and the pelican  
Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought 440  
Might sit and sun himself. — Alas! Alas!  
In vain for such solemnity I looked;  
Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies, ears  
vexed

By chattering popinjays; the inner heart  
Seemed trivial, and the impresses without  
Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight

Those venerable Doctors saw of old,  
When all who dwelt within these famous  
walls  
Led in abstemiousness a studious life;

When, in forlorn and naked chambers  
cooped 450

And crowded, o'er the ponderous books  
they hung

Like caterpillars eating out their way

In silence, or with keen devouring noise

Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes then

At matins froze, and couched at curfew-  
time,

Trained up through piety and zeal to prize

Spare diet, patient labour, and plain weeds.

O seat of Arts! renowned throughout the  
world!

Far different service in those homely days

The Muses' modest nurslings underwent 460

From their first childhood: in that glorious  
time

When Learning, like a stranger come from  
far,

Sounding through Christian lands her  
trumpet, roused

Peasant and king; when boys and youths,  
the growth

Of ragged villages and crazy huts,

Forsook their homes, and, errant in the quest

Of Patron, famous school or friendly nook,

Where, pensioned, they in shelter might sit  
down,

From town to town and through wide scat-  
tered realms

Journeyed with ponderous folios in their  
hands; 470

And often, starting from some covert place,

Saluted the chance comer on the road,

Crying, "An obolus, a penny give

To a poor scholar!"—when illustrious  
men,

Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,

Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read

Before the doors or windows of their cells

By moonshine through mere lack of taper  
light.

But peace to vain regrets! We see but  
darkly

Even when we look behind us, and best  
things 480

Are not so pure by nature that they needs

Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,

Their highest promise. If the mariner,

When at reluctant distance he hath passed

Some tempting island, could but know the  
ills

That must have fallen upon him had he  
brought

His bark to land upon the wished-for shore,  
Good cause would oft be his to thank the  
surf

Whose white belt scared him thence, or  
wind that blew

Inexorably adverse: for myself

I grieve not; happy is the gowned youth, 490

Who only misses what I missed, who falls

No lower than I fell.

I did not love,

Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course

Of our scholastic studies; could have wished

To see the river flow with ampler range

And freer pace; but more, far more, I  
grieved

To see displayed among an eager few,

Who in the field of contest persevered,

Passions unworthy of youth's generous heart

And mounting spirit, pitiously repaid, 501

When so disturbed, whatever palms are  
won.

From these I turned to travel with the shoal

Of more unthinking natures, easy minds

And pillow; yet not wanting love that  
makes

The day pass lightly on, when foresight  
sleeps,

And wisdom and the pledges interchanged

With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given up

To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood 510

In my own mind remote from social life,

(At least from what we commonly so name,)

Like a lone shepherd on a promontory,

Who lacking occupation looks far forth

Into the boundless sea, and rather makes

Than finds what he beholds. And sure it is,

That this first transit from the smooth de-  
lights

And wild outlandish walks of simple youth

To something that resembles an approach

Towards human business, to a privileged  
world 520

Within a world, a midway residence

With all its intervenient imagery,

Did better suit my visionary mind,

Far better, than to have been bolted forth,

Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way

Among the conflicts of substantial life;

By a more just gradation did lead on

To higher things; more naturally matured,

For permanent possession, better fruits,

Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue. 530

In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,

With playful zest of fancy, did we note  
(How could we less?) the manners and the  
ways

Of those who lived distinguished by the  
badge

Of good or ill report; or those with whom  
By frame of Academic discipline

We were perforce connected, men whose  
sway

And known authority of office served  
To set our minds on edge, and did no more.

Nor wanted we rich pastime of this kind, 540  
Found everywhere, but chiefly in the ring  
Of the grave Elders, men unscoured, grotesque

In character, tricked out like aged trees  
Which through the lapse of their infirmity  
Give ready place to any random seed  
That chooses to be reared upon their trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly  
Those shepherd swains whom I had lately  
left

Appeared a different aspect of old age; 540  
How different! yet both distinctly marked,  
Objects embossed to catch the general eye,  
Or portraitures for special use designed,  
As some might seem, so aptly do they serve  
To illustrate Nature's book of rudiments —  
That book upheld as with maternal care  
When she would enter on her tender scheme  
Of teaching comprehension with delight,  
And mingling playful with pathetic thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life  
And manners finely wrought, the delicate  
race 550

Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and down  
Through that state arras woven with silk  
and gold;

This wily interchange of snaky hues,  
Willingly or unwillingly revealed,  
I neither knew nor cared for; and as such  
Were wanting here, I took what might be  
found

Of less elaborate fabric. At this day  
I smile, in many a mountain solitude  
Conjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks  
Of character, in points of wit as broad, 570  
As aught by wooden images performed  
For entertainment of the gaping crowd  
At wake or fair. And oftentimes do flit  
Remembrances before me of old men —  
Old humourists, who have been long in their  
graves,

And having almost in my mind put off  
Their human names, have into phantoms  
passed

Of texture midway between life and books.

I play the loiterer: 't is enough to note  
That here in dwarf proportions were ex-  
pressed 580

The limbs of the great world; its eager  
strifes

Collaterally portrayed, as in mock fight,  
A tournament of blows, some hardly dealt  
Though short of mortal combat; and what-  
e'er

Might in this pageant be supposed to hit  
An artless rustic's notice, this way less,  
More that way, was not wasted upon me —  
And yet the spectacle may well demand  
A more substantial name, no mimic show,  
Itself a living part of a live whole, 590  
A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees  
And shapes of spurious fame and short-lived  
praise

Here sate in state, and fed with daily alms  
Retainers won away from solid good;  
And here was Labour, his own bond-slave;  
Hope,

That never set the pains against the prize;  
Idleness halting with his weary clog,  
And poor misguided Shame, and witless  
Fear,

And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;  
Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray; 600  
Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and guile,  
Murmuring submission, and bald govern-  
ment,

(The idol weak as the idolater),  
And Decency and Custom starving Truth,  
And blind Authority beating with his staff  
The child that might have led him; Empti-  
ness

Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth  
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Of these and other kindred notices  
I cannot say what portion is in truth 610  
The naked recollection of that time,  
And what may rather have been called to  
life

By after-meditation. But delight  
That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,  
Is still with Innocence its own reward,  
This was not wanting. Carelessly I roamed  
As through a wide museum from whose  
stores

A casual rarity is singled out  
And has its brief perusal, then gives way  
To others, all supplanted in their turn; 620  
Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of  
things

That are by nature most unneighbourly,  
The head turns round and cannot right  
itself;

And though an aching and a barren sense  
Of gay confusion still be uppermost,  
With few wise longings and but little love,  
Yet to the memory something cleaves at  
last,  
Whence profit may be drawn in times to  
come.

Thus in submissive idleness, my Friend !  
The labouring time of autumn, winter,  
spring, 630  
Eight months ! rolled pleasingly away; the  
ninth  
Came and returned me to my native hills.

#### BOOK FOURTH

##### SUMMER VACATION

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when quick-  
ening steps

Followed each other till a dreary moor  
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon whose  
top

Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,  
I overlooked the bed of Windermere,  
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.

With exultation, at my feet I saw  
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,  
A universe of Nature's fairest forms  
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,  
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay. 11

I bounded down the hill shouting again  
For the old Ferryman; to the shout the  
rocks

Replied, and when the Charon of the flood  
Had staid his oars, and touched the jutting  
pier,

I did not step into the well-known boat  
Without a cordial greeting. Thence with  
speed

Up the familiar hill I took my way  
Towards that sweet Valley where I had been  
reared;

'T was but a short hour's walk, ere veering  
round 20

I saw the snow-white church upon her hill

Sit like a thronèd Lady, sending out  
A gracious look all over her domain.

Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking town;  
With eager footsteps I advance and reach  
The cottage threshold where my journey  
closed.

Glad welcome had I, with some tears, per-  
haps,

From my old Dame, so kind and motherly,  
While she perused me with a parent's pride.  
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like  
dew 30

Upon thy grave, good creature ! While my  
heart

Can beat never will I forget thy name.  
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where thou  
liest

After thy innocent and busy stir  
In narrow cares, thy little daily growth  
Of calm enjoyments, after eighty years,  
And more than eighty, of untroubled life;  
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy blood  
Honoured with little less than filial love. 39

What joy was mine to see thee once again,  
Thee and thy dwelling, and a crowd of  
things

About its narrow precincts all beloved,  
And many of them seeming yet my own !  
Why should I speak of what a thousand  
hearts

Have felt, and every man alive can guess ?  
The rooms, the court, the garden were not  
left

Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat  
Round the stone table under the dark pine,  
Friendly to studious or to festive hours;  
Nor that unruly child of mountain birth, 50  
The famous brook, who, soon as he was  
boxed

Within our garden, found himself at once,  
As if by trick insidious and unkind,  
Stripped of his voice and left to dimple  
down

(Without an effort and without a will)  
A channel paved by man's officious care.

I looked at him and smiled, and smiled  
again,

And in the press of twenty thousand  
thoughts,

"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are you  
there ?"

Well might sarcastic Fancy then have  
whispered, 60

"An emblem here behold of thy own life;  
In its late course of even days with all

Their smooth enthrallment;" but the heart  
was full,

Too full for that reproach. My aged Dame  
Walked proudly at my side: she guided me;  
I willing, nay — nay, wishing to be led.

— The face of every neighbour whom I met  
Was like a volume to me; some were hailed  
Upon the road, some busy at their work,  
Unceremonious greetings interchanged 70  
With half the length of a long field between.  
Among my schoolfellows I scattered round  
Like recognitions, but with some constraint  
Attended, doubtless, with a little pride,  
But with more shame, for my habiliments,  
The transformation wrought by gay attire.  
Not less delighted did I take my place  
At our domestic table: and, dear Friend!  
In this endeavour simply to relate

A Poet's history, may I leave untold 80  
The thankfulness with which I laid me down  
In my accustomed bed, more welcome now  
Perhaps than if it had been more desired  
(Or been more often thought of with regret;  
That lowly bed whence I had heard the wind  
Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so  
oft

Had lain awake on summer nights to watch  
The moon in splendour couched among the  
leaves

Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;  
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to  
and fro 90

In the dark summit of the waving tree  
She rocked with every impulse of the breeze.

Among the favourites whom it pleased me  
well

To see again, was one by ancient right  
Our innate, a rough terrier of the hills;  
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained  
To hunt the badger and unearth the fox  
Among the impervious crags, but having  
been

From youth our own adopted, he had passed  
Into a gentler service. And when first 100  
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day  
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,  
The fermentation, and the vernal heat  
Of poesy, affecting private shades  
Like a sick Lover, then this dog was used  
To watch me, an attendant and a friend,  
Obsequious to my steps early and late,  
Though often of such dilatory walk  
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made. 109  
A hundred times when, roving high and low,

I have been harassed with the toil of verse,  
Much pains and little progress, and at once  
Some lovely Image in the song rose up  
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the  
sea;

Then have I darted forwards to let loose  
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,  
Caressing him again and yet again.

And when at evening on the public way  
I sauntered, like a river murmuring  
And talking to itself when all things else 120  
Are still, the creature trotted on before;  
Such was his custom; but whene'er he met  
A passenger approaching, he would turn  
To give me timely notice, and straightway,  
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed  
My voice, composed my gait, and, with the  
air

And mien of one whose thoughts are free,  
advanced

To give and take a greeting that might save  
My name from piteous rumours, such as wait  
On men suspected to be crazed in brain. 130

Those walks well worthy to be prized and  
loved —

Regretted! — that word, too, was on my  
tongue,

But they were richly laden with all good,  
And cannot be remembered but with thanks  
And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart —  
Those walks in all their freshness now came  
back

Like a returning Spring. When first I  
made

Once more the circuit of our little lake,  
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,  
That day consummate happiness was mine,  
Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contempla-  
tive. 141

The sun was set, or setting, when I left  
Our cottage door, and evening soon brought  
on

A sober hour, not winning or serene,  
For cold and raw the air was, and untuned:  
But as a face we love is sweetest then  
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look  
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart  
Have fulness in herself; even so with me  
It fared that evening. Gently did my soul  
Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood  
Naked, as in the presence of her God. 152  
While on I walked, a comfort seemed to  
touch

A heart that had not been disconsolate:



Strength came where weakness was not  
known to be,

At least not felt; and restoration came  
Like an intruder knocking at the door  
Of unacknowledged weariness. I took  
The balance, and with firm hand weighed  
myself.

— Of that external scene which round me  
lay, 100

Little, in this abstraction, did I see;  
Remembered less; but I had inward hopes  
And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and  
soothed,

Conversed with promises, had glimmering  
views

How life pervades the undecaying mind;  
How the immortal soul with God-like  
power

Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest  
sleep

That time can lay upon her; how on earth,  
Man, if he do but live within the light 101,  
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad  
His being armed with strength that cannot  
fail.

Nor was there want of milder thoughts, of  
love,

Of innocence, and holiday repose;  
And more than pastoral quiet. 'mid the stir  
Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end  
At last, or glorious, by endurance won.

Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down  
Alone, continuing there to muse: the slopes  
And heights meanwhile were slowly over-  
spread 171

With darkness, and before a rippling breeze  
The long lake lengthened out its hoary line,  
And in the sheltered coppice where I sate,  
Around me from among the hazel leaves,  
Now here, now there, moved by the strag-  
gling wind,

Came ever and anon a breath-like sound,  
Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog,  
The off and on companion of my walk;  
And such, at times, believing them to be,  
I turned my head to look if he were there;  
Then into solemn thought I passed once  
more. 190

A freshness also found I at this time  
In human life, the daily life of those  
Whose occupations really I loved;  
The peaceful scene oft filled me with sur-  
prise  
Changed like a garden in the heat of spring

After an eight-days' absence. For (to omit  
The things which were the same and yet  
appeared

Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,  
A narrow Vale where each was known to  
all,

'T was not indifferent to a youthful mind  
To mark some sheltering bower or sunny  
nook 201

Where an old man had used to sit alone,  
Now vacant; pale-faced babes whom I had  
left

In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet  
Of a pleased grandame tottering up and  
down;

And growing girls whose beauty, filched  
away

With all its pleasant promises, was gone  
To deck some slighted playmate's homely  
check.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense,  
And often looking round was moved to  
smiles 210

Such as a delicate work of humour breeds;  
I read, without design, the opinions,  
thoughts,

Of those plain-living people now observed  
With clearer knowledge; with another eye  
I saw the quiet woodman in the woods,  
The shepherd roam the hills. With new  
delight,

This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired  
Dame;

Saw her go forth to church or other work  
Of state equipped in monumental trim;  
Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the like),  
A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers 221  
Wore in old times. Her smooth domestic  
life,

Affectionate without disquietude,  
Her talk, her business, pleased me; and  
no less

Her clear though shallow stream of piety  
That ran on Sabbath days a fresher course;  
With thoughts unfelt till now I saw her  
read

Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons,  
And loved the book, when she had dropped  
asleep

And made of it a pillow for her head. 230

Nor less do I remember to have felt,  
Distinctly manifested at this time,  
A human-heartedness about my love

For objects hitherto the absolute wealth  
 Of my own private being and no more;  
 Which I had loved, even as a blessed spirit  
 Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,  
 Might love in individual happiness.  
 But now there opened on me other thoughts  
 Of change, congratulation or regret, <sup>240</sup>  
 A pensive feeling ! It spread far and wide;  
 The trees, the mountains shared it, and the  
 brooks,  
 The stars of Heaven, now seen in their old  
 haunts —  
 White Sirius glittering o'er the southern  
 crags,  
 Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,  
 Acquaintances of every little child,  
 And Jupiter, my own beloved star !  
 Whatever shadings of mortality,  
 Whatever imports from the world of death  
 Had come among these objects hereto-  
 fore, <sup>250</sup>  
 Were, in the main, of mood less tender:  
 strong,  
 Deep, gloomy were they, and severe; the  
 scatterings  
 Of awe or tremulous dread, that had given  
 way  
 In later youth to yearnings of a love  
 Enthusiastic, to delight and hope.

As one who hangs down-bending from  
 the side  
 Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast  
 Of a still water, solacing himself  
 With such discoveries as his eye can make  
 Beneath him in the bottom of the deep, <sup>260</sup>  
 Sees many beauteous sights — weeds, fishes,  
 flowers,  
 Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies  
 more,  
 Yet often is perplexed, and cannot part  
 The shadow from the substance, rocks and  
 sky,  
 Mountains and clouds, reflected in the depth  
 Of the clear flood, from things which there  
 abide  
 In their true dwelling; now is crossed by  
 gleam  
 Of his own image, by a sunbeam now,  
 And wavering motions sent he knows not  
 whence,  
 Impediments that make his task more  
 sweet; <sup>270</sup>  
 Such pleasant office have we long pursued  
 Incumbent o'er the surface of past time

With like success, nor often have appeared  
 Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned  
 Than these to which the Tale, indulgent  
 Friend !

Would now direct thy notice. Yet in spite  
 Of pleasure won, and knowledge not with-  
 held,

There was an inner falling off — I loved,  
 Loved deeply all that had been loved before,  
 More deeply even than ever: but a swarm  
 Of heady schemes jostling each other,  
 gawds, <sup>281</sup>

And feast and dance, and public revelry,  
 And sports and games (too grateful in  
 themselves,

Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,  
 Than as they were a badge glossy and fresh  
 Of manliness and freedom) all conspired  
 To lure my mind from firm habitual quest  
 Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal  
 And damp those yearnings which had once  
 been mine —

A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given  
 up <sup>290</sup>

To his own eager thoughts. It would de-  
 mand

Some skill, and longer time than may be  
 spared

To paint these vanities, and how they  
 wrought

In haunts where they, till now, had been  
 unknown.

It seemed the very garments that I wore  
 Preyed on my strength, and stopped the  
 quiet stream  
 Of self-forgetfulness.

Yes, that heartless chase  
 Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange  
 For books and nature at that early age.

'T is true, some casual knowledge might be  
 gained <sup>300</sup>

Of character or life; but at that time,  
 Of manners put to school I took small note,  
 And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.  
 Far better had it been to exalt the mind  
 By solitary study, to uphold

Intense desire through meditative peace;  
 And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,  
 The memory of one particular hour

Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a  
 throng

Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons  
 staid, <sup>310</sup>

A medley of all tempers, I had passed  
 The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,

With din of instruments and shuffling feet,  
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,  
And unaimed prattle flying up and down;  
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there  
Slight shocks\* of young love-liking inter-

persed,  
Whose transient pleasure mounted to the  
head,

And tingled through the veins. Ere we  
retired,

The cock had crowed, and now the eastern  
sky

Was kindling, not unseen, from humble  
copse

And open field, through which the pathway  
wound,

And homeward led my steps. Magnificent  
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,

Glorious as e'er I had beheld — in front,  
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,

The solid mountains shone, bright as the  
clouds,

Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean  
light;

And in the meadows and the lower grounds  
Was all the sweetness of a common

dawn —

Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,  
And labourers going forth to till the fields.

Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the  
brim

My heart was full; I made no vows, but  
vows

Were then made for me; bond unknown to  
me

Was given, that I should be, else sinning  
greatly,

A dedicated Spirit. On I walked  
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was at  
that time

A parti-coloured show of grave and gay, <sup>340</sup>  
Solid and light, short-sighted and profound;

Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,  
Consorting in one mansion unreprieved.

The worth I knew of powers that I pos-  
sessed,

Though slighted and too oft misused. Be-  
sides,

That summer, swarming as it did with  
thoughts

Transient and idle, lacked not intervals  
When Folly from the frown of fleeting

Time

Shrunk, and the mind experienced in her-  
self

Conformity as just as that of old <sup>350</sup>  
To the end and written spirit of God's

works,  
Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,

Through pregnant vision, separate or con-  
joined.

When from our better selves we have  
too long

Been parted by the hurrying world, and  
droop,

Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,  
How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;

How potent a mere image of her sway;  
Most potent when impressed upon the mind

With an appropriate human centre — her-  
mit, <sup>360</sup>

Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;  
Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot

Is treading, where no other face is seen)  
Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on the

top  
Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves;

Or as the soul of that great Power is met  
Sometimes embodied on a public road,

When, for the night deserted, it assumes  
A character of quiet more profound

Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer months  
Were flown, and autumn brought its annual

show <sup>371</sup>  
Of oars with oars contending, sails with  
sails.

Upon Winander's spacious breast, it  
chanced

That — after I had left a flower-decked  
room

(Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, sur-  
vived

To a late hour), and spirits overwrought  
Were making night do penance for a day

Spent in a round of strenuous idleness —  
My homeward course led up a long ascent,

Where the road's watery surface, to the  
top <sup>380</sup>

Of that sharp rising, glittered to the moon  
And bore the semblance of another stream

Stealing with silent lapse to join the brook  
That murmured in the vale. All else was

still;  
No living thing appeared in earth or air,

And, save the flowing water's peaceful  
voice,

Sound there was none—but, lo! an uncouth shape,

Shown by a sudden turning of the road,  
So near that, slipping back into the shade  
Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him well, <sup>390</sup>

Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,  
A span above man's common measure, tall,  
Stiff, lank, and upright; a more meagre man

Was never seen before by night or day.  
Long were his arms, pallid his hands; his mouth  
Looked ghastly in the moonlight: from behind,

A mile-stone propped him; I could also ken  
That he was clothed in military garb,  
Though faded, yet entire. Companionless,  
No dog attending, by no staff sustained, <sup>400</sup>  
He stood, and in his very dress appeared  
A desolation, a simplicity,  
To which the trappings of a gaudy world  
Make a strange back-ground. From his lips, ere long,

Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain  
Or some uneasy thought; yet still his form  
Kept the same awful steadiness—at his feet

His shadow lay, and moved not. From self-blame

Not wholly free, I watched him thus; at length

Subduing my heart's specious cowardice, <sup>410</sup>  
I left the shady nook where I had stood  
And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-place

He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm  
In measured gesture lifted to his head  
Returned my salutation; then resumed  
His station as before; and when I asked  
His history, the veteran, in reply,  
Was neither slow nor eager; but, unmoved,  
And with a quiet uncomplaining voice,  
A stately air of mild indifference, <sup>420</sup>  
He told in few plain words a soldier's tale—

That in the Tropic Islands he had served,  
Whence he had landed scarcely three weeks past;

That on his landing he had been dismissed,  
And now was travelling towards his native home.

This heard, I said, in pity, "Come with me."  
He stooped, and straightway from the ground took up

An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—  
A staff which must have dropped from his slack hand

And lay till now neglected in the grass. <sup>430</sup>  
Though weak his step and cautious, he appeared

To travel without pain, and I beheld,  
With an astonishment but ill suppressed,  
His ghostly figure moving at my side;  
Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, forbear

To turn from present hardships to the past,  
And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,  
Sprinkling this talk with questions, better spared,

On what he might himself have seen or felt.

He all the while was in demeanour calm, <sup>440</sup>  
Concise in answer; solemn and sublime  
He might have seemed, but that in all he said

There was a strange half-absence, as of one

Knowing too well the importance of his theme,

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse  
Soon ended, and together on we passed  
In silence through a wood gloomy and still.  
Up-turning, then, along an open field,  
We reached a cottage. At the door I knocked,

And earnestly to charitable care <sup>450</sup>  
Commended him as a poor friendless man,  
Belated and by sickness overcome.

Assured that now the traveller would repose  
In comfort, I entreated that henceforth  
He would not linger in the public ways,  
But ask for timely furtherance and help  
Such as his state required. At this reproof,  
With the same ghastly mildness in his look,  
He said, "My trust is in the God of Heaven,

And in the eye of him who passes me!" <sup>459</sup>

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,  
And now the soldier touched his hat once more

With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice,  
Whose tone bespoke reviving interests  
Till then unfelt, he thanked me; I returned  
The farewell blessing of the patient man,  
And so we parted. Back I cast a look,  
And lingered near the door a little space,  
Then sought with quiet heart my distant home.

## BOOK FIFTH

## BOOKS

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm  
felt,  
Through earth and sky, spreads widely, and  
sends deep  
Into the soul its tranquillising power,  
Even then I sometimes grieve for thee, O  
Man,  
Earth's paramount Creature ! not so much  
for woes  
That thou endurest; heavy though that  
weight be,  
Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light  
divine  
Doth melt away; but for those palms  
achieved  
Through length of time, by patient exercise  
Of study and hard thought; there, there,  
it is<sup>10</sup>  
That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto,  
In progress through this Verse, my mind  
hath looked  
Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven  
As her prime teacher, intercourse with man  
Established by the sovereign Intellect,  
Who through that bodily image hath dif-  
fused,  
As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,  
A deathless spirit. Thou also, man ! hast  
wrought,  
For commerce of thy nature with herself,  
Things that aspire to unconquerable life;  
And yet we feel — we cannot choose but  
feel —<sup>21</sup>  
That they must perish. Tremblings of the  
heart  
It gives, to think that our immortal being  
No more shall need such garments; and yet  
man,  
As long as he shall be the child of earth,  
Might almost "weep to have" what he may  
lose,  
Nor be himself extinguished, but survive,  
Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.  
A thought is with me sometimes, and I  
say, —  
Should the whole frame of earth by inward  
throes<sup>30</sup>  
Be wrenched, or fire come down from far  
to scorch  
Her pleasant habitations, and dry up  
Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,  
Yet would the living Presence still subsist

Victorious, and composure would ensue,  
And kindlings like the morning — presage  
sure

Of day returning and of life revived.  
But all the meditations of mankind,  
Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth  
By reason built, or passion, which itself<sup>40</sup>  
Is highest reason in a soul sublime;  
The consecrated works of Bard and Sage,  
Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men,  
Twin labourers and heirs of the same hopes;  
Where would they be ? Oh ! why hath not  
the Mind  
Some element to stamp her image on  
In nature somewhat nearer to her own ?  
Why, gifted with such powers to send  
abroad  
Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so frail ?

One day, when from my lips a like com-  
plaint<sup>50</sup>  
Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,  
He with a smile made answer, that in truth  
'T was going far to seek disquietude;  
But on the front of his reproof confessed  
That he himself had oftentimes given way  
To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told,  
That once in the stillness of a summer's  
noon,  
While I was seated in a rocky cave  
By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,  
The famous history of the errant knight<sup>60</sup>  
Recorded by Cervantes, these same  
thoughts  
Beset me, and to height unusual rose,  
While listlessly I sate, and, having closed  
The book, had turned my eyes toward the  
wide sea.

On poetry and geometric truth,  
And their high privilege of lasting life,  
From all internal injury exempt,  
I mused; upon these chiefly: and at length,  
My senses yielding to the sultry air,<sup>69</sup>  
Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream.  
I saw before me stretched a boundless plain  
Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,  
And as I looked around, distress and fear  
Came creeping over me, when at my side,  
Close at my side, an uncouth shape ap-  
peared  
Upon a dromedary, mounted high.  
He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes:  
A lance he bore, and underneath one arm  
A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell  
Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight<sup>80</sup>

Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide  
Was present, one who with unerring skill  
Would through the desert lead me; and  
while yet

I looked and looked, self-questioned what  
this freight

Which the new-comer carried through the  
waste

Could mean, the Arab told me that the  
stone

(To give it in the language of the dream)

Was "Euclid's Elements," and "This,"  
said he,

"Is something of more worth;" and at the  
word

Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in  
shape,

In colour so resplendent, with command

That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,  
And heard that instant in an unknown tongue,

Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,  
A loud prophetic blast of harmony;

An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold  
Destruction to the children of the earth

By deluge, now at hand. No sooner ceased  
The song, than the Arab with calm look de-  
clared

That all would come to pass of which the  
voice

Had given forewarning, and that he himself  
Was going then to bury those two books:

The one that held acquaintance with the  
stars,

And wedded soul to soul in purest bond  
Of reason, undisturbed by space or time;

The other that was a god, yea many gods,  
Had voices more than all the winds, with  
power

To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,  
Through every clime, the heart of human  
kind.

While this was uttering, strange as it may  
seem,

I wondered not, although I plainly saw

The one to be a stone, the other a shell;

Nor doubted once but that they both were  
books,

Having a perfect faith in all that passed.  
Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt

To cleave unto this man; but when I prayed  
To share his enterprise, he hurried on

Reckless of me: I followed, not unseen,  
For oftentimes he cast a backward look,

Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in  
rest,

He rode, I keeping pace with him; and now  
He, to my fancy, had become the knight  
Whose tale Cervantes tells; yet not the  
knight,

But was an Arab of the desert too;  
Of these was neither, and was both at once.

His countenance, meanwhile, grew more  
disturbed;

And, looking backwards when he looked,  
mine eyes

Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,

A bed of glittering light: I asked the cause:

"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep" <sup>130</sup>  
Gathering upon us;" quickening then the  
pace

Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,  
He left me: I called after him aloud;

He heeded not; but, with his twofold charge  
Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,

Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,  
With the fleet waters of a drowning world

In chase of him; whereat I waked in terror,  
And saw the sea before me, and the book,

In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of  
sleep

This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld, <sup>141</sup>  
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given

A substance, fancied him a living man,  
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed

By love and feeling, and internal thought  
Protracted among endless solitudes;

Have shaped him wandering upon this quest!  
Nor have I pitied him; but rather felt

Reverence was due to a being thus em-  
ployed; <sup>150</sup>

And thought that, in the blind and awful  
lair

Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.  
Enow there are on earth to take in charge

Their wives, their children, and their virgin  
loves,

Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;  
Enow to stir for these; yea, will I say,

Contemplating in soberness the approach  
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth

Or heaven made manifest, that I could share  
That maniac's fond anxiety, and go <sup>160</sup>

Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least  
Me hath such strong entrancement over-  
come,

When I have held a volume in my hand,  
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,

Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine!

Great and benign, indeed, must be the  
 power  
 Of living nature, which could thus so long  
 Detain me from the best of other guides  
 And dearest helpers, left unthanked, un-  
 praised,  
 Even in the time of lisping infancy; 170  
 And later down, in prattling childhood even,  
 While I was travelling back among those  
 days,  
 How could I ever play an ingrate's part?  
 Once more should I have made those bowers  
 resound,  
 By intermingling strains of thankfulness  
 With their own thoughtless melodies; at  
 least  
 It might have well beseeemed me to repeat  
 Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,  
 In slender accents of sweet verse, some tale  
 That did bewitch me then, and soothes me  
 now. 180  
 O Friend! O Poet! brother of my soul,  
 Think not that I could pass along untouched  
 By these remembrances. Yet wherefore  
 speak?  
 Why call upon a few weak words to say  
 What is already written in the hearts  
 Of all that breathe? — what in the path of  
 all  
 Drops daily from the tongue of every child,  
 Wherever man is found? The trickling tear  
 Upon the cheek of listening Infancy  
 Proclaims it, and the insuperable look 190  
 That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave  
 There registered: whatever else of power  
 Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may be  
 Peculiar to myself, let that remain  
 Where still it works, though hidden from  
 all search  
 Among the depths of time. Yet is it just  
 That here, in memory of all books which lay  
 Their sure foundations in the heart of man,  
 Whether by native prose, or numerous verse,  
 That in the name of all inspired souls — 201  
 From Homer the great Thunderer, from  
 the voice  
 That roars along the bed of Jewish song,  
 And that more varied and elaborate,  
 Those trumpet-tones of harmony that shake  
 Our shores in England, — from those loftiest  
 notes  
 Down to the low and wren-like warblings,  
 made

For cottagers and spinners at the wheel,  
 And sun-burnt travellers resting their tired  
 limbs,  
 Stretched under wayside hedge-rows, ballad  
 tunes, 210  
 Food for the hungry ears of little ones,  
 And of old men who have survived their  
 joys —  
 'T is just that in behalf of these, the works,  
 And of the men that framed them, whether  
 known  
 Or sleeping nameless in their scattered  
 graves,  
 That I should here assert their rights, attest  
 Their honours, and should, once for all, pro-  
 nounce  
 Their benediction; speak of them as Powers  
 For ever to be hallowed; only less,  
 For what we are and what we may become,  
 Than Nature's self, which is the breath of  
 God, 221  
 Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I stoop  
 To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,  
 And, by these thoughts admonished, will  
 pour out  
 Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was  
 reared  
 Safe from an evil which these days have  
 laid  
 Upon the children of the land, a pest  
 That might have dried me up, body and soul.  
 This verse is dedicate to Nature's self, 230  
 And things that teach as Nature teaches:  
 then,  
 Oh! where had been the Man, the Poet  
 where,  
 Where had we been, we two, beloved Friend!  
 If in the season of unperilous choice,  
 In lieu of wandering, as we did, through  
 vales  
 Rich with indigenous produce, open ground  
 Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,  
 We had been followed, hourly watched, and  
 noosed,  
 Each in his several melancholy walk  
 Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its  
 feed, 240  
 Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;  
 Or rather like a stalled ox debarred  
 From touch of growing grass, that may  
 not taste  
 A flower till it have yielded up its sweets  
 A prelibation to the mower's scythe.

Behold the parent hen amid her brood,  
 Though fledged and feathered, and well  
     pleased to part  
 And straggle from her presence, still a  
     brood,  
 And she herself from the maternal bond <sup>249</sup>  
 Still undischarged; yet doth she little more  
 Than move with them in tenderness and  
     love,  
 A centre to the circle which they make;  
 And now and then, alike from need of theirs  
 And call of her own natural appetites,  
 She scratches, ransacks up the earth for  
     food,  
 Which they partake at pleasure. Early  
     died  
 My honoured Mother, she who was the  
     heart  
 And hinge of all our learnings and our  
     loves:  
 She left us destitute, and, as we might,  
 Trooping together. Little suits it me <sup>260</sup>  
 To break upon the sabbath of her rest  
 With any thought that looks at others'  
     blame;  
 Nor would I praise her but in perfect love.  
 Hence am I checked: but let me boldly say,  
 In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,  
 Unheard by her, that she, not falsely taught,  
 Fetching her goodness rather from times  
     past,  
 Than shaping novelties for times to come,  
 Had no presumption, no such jealousy, <sup>269</sup>  
 Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust  
 Our nature, but had virtual faith that He  
 Who fills the mother's breast with innocent  
     milk,  
 Doth also for our nobler part provide,  
 Under His great correction and control,  
 As innocent instincts, and as innocent food;  
 Or draws, for minds that are left free to  
     trust  
 In the simplicities of opening life,  
 Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded  
     weeds.  
 This was her creed, and therefore she was  
     pure  
 From anxious fear of error or mishap, <sup>280</sup>  
 And evil, overweeningly so called;  
 Was not puffed up by false unnatural hopes,  
 Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,  
 Nor with impatience from the season asked  
 More than its timely produce; rather loved  
 The hours for what they are, than from  
     regard

Glanced on their promises in restless pride.  
 Such was she — not from faculties more  
     strong  
 Than others have, but from the times, per-  
     haps,  
 And spot in which she lived, and through a  
     grace  
 Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness, <sup>290</sup>  
 A heart that found benignity and hope,  
 Being itself benign.

My drift I fear  
 Is scarcely obvious; but, that common sense  
 May try this modern system by its fruits,  
 Leave let me take to place before her sight  
 A specimen portrayed with faithful hand.  
 Full early trained to worship seemliness,  
 This model of a child is never known  
 To mix in quarrels; that were far beneath  
 Its dignity; with gifts he bubbles o'er <sup>301</sup>  
 As generous as a fountain; selfishness  
 May not come near him, nor the little throng  
 Of flitting pleasures tempt him from his  
     path;  
 The wandering beggars propagate his name,  
 Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,  
 And natural or supernatural fear,  
 Unless it leap upon him in a dream,  
 Touches him not. To enhance the wonder,  
     see  
 How arch his notices, how nice his sense  
 Of the ridiculous; not blind is he <sup>311</sup>  
 To the broad follies of the licensed world,  
 Yet innocent himself withal, though shrewd,  
 And can read lectures upon innocence;  
 A miracle of scientific lore.  
 Ships he can guide across the pathless sea,  
 And tell you all their cunning; he can read  
 The inside of the earth, and spell the stars;  
 He knows the policies of foreign lands;  
 Can string you names of districts, cities,  
     towns, <sup>320</sup>  
 The whole world over, tight as beads of  
     dew  
 Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he  
     weighs;  
 All things are put to question; he must live  
 Knowing that he grows wiser every day  
 Or else not live at all, and seeing too  
 Each little drop of wisdom as it falls  
 Into the dimpling cistern of his heart:  
 For this unnatural growth the trainer blame,  
 Pity the tree. — Poor human vanity, <sup>329</sup>  
 Wert thou extinguished, little would be left  
 Which he could truly love; but how escape?  
 For, ever as a thought of purer birth



Rises to lead him toward a better clime,  
 Some intermeddler still is on the watch  
 To drive him back, and pound him, like a  
     stray,  
 Within the pinfold of his own conceit.  
 Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved  
     to find  
 The playthings, which her love designed for  
     him,  
 Unthought of: in their woodland beds the  
     flowers  
 Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn. 340  
 Oh! give us once again the wishing-cap  
 Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat  
 Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,  
 And Sabra in the forest with St. George!  
 The child, whose love is here, at least, doth  
     reap  
 One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,  
 Who, with a broad highway, have over-  
     bridged  
 The froward chaos of futurity,  
 Tamed to their bidding; they who have the  
     skill 350  
 To manage books, and things, and make  
     them act  
 On infant minds as surely as the sun  
 Deals with a flower; the keepers of our  
     time,  
 The guides and wardens of our faculties,  
 Sages who in their prescience would control  
 All accidents, and to the very road  
 Which they have fashioned would confine  
     us down,  
 Like engines; when will their presumption  
     learn,  
 That in the unreasoning progress of the  
     world  
 A wiser spirit is at work for us, 360  
 A better eye than theirs, most prodigal  
 Of blessings, and most studious of our good,  
 Even in what seem our most unfruitful  
     hours?

There was a Boy: ye knew him well, ye  
     cliffs  
 And islands of Winander! — many a time  
 At evening, when the earliest stars began  
 To move along the edges of the hills,  
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone  
 Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,  
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
     hands 370

Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his  
     mouth  
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
 That they might answer him; and they  
     would shout  
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
 Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,  
 And long halloos and screams, and echoes  
     loud,  
 Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild  
 Of jocund din; and, when a lengthened  
     pause  
 Of silence came and baffled his best skill,  
 Then sometimes, in that silence while he  
     hung 381  
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
 Has carried far into his heart the voice  
 Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene  
 Would enter unawares into his mind,  
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, re-  
     ceived  
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates, and  
     died  
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
     old. 390  
 Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale  
 Where he was born; the grassy church-  
     yard hangs  
 Upon a slope above the village school,  
 And through that churchyard when my way  
     has led  
 On summer evenings, I believe that there  
 A long half hour together I have stood  
 Mute, looking at the grave in which he lies!  
 Even now appears before the mind's clear  
     eye  
 That self-same village church; I see her sit  
 (The thrond Lady whom erewhile we hailed)  
 On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy 401  
 Who slumbers at her feet, — forgetful, too,  
 Of all her silent neighbourhood of graves,  
 And listening only to the gladsome sounds  
 That, from the rural school ascending, play  
 Beneath her and about her. May she long  
 Behold a race of young ones like to those  
 With whom I herded! — (easily, indeed,  
 We might have fed upon a fatter soil  
 Of arts and letters — but be that forgiven) —  
 A race of real children; not too wise, 411  
 Too learned, or too good; but wanton, fresh,  
 And banded up and down by love and hate;

Not unresentful where self-justified;  
 Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest,  
 shy;  
 Mad at their sports like withered leaves in  
 winds;  
 Though doing wrong and suffering, and full  
 off  
 Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight  
 Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not  
 In happiness to the happiest upon earth. 420  
 Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,  
 Be these the daily strengtheners of their  
 minds;  
 May books and Nature be their early joy!  
 And knowledge, rightly honoured with that  
 name —  
 Knowledge not purchased by the loss of  
 power!

Well do I call to mind the very week  
 When I was first intrusted to the care  
 Of that sweet Valley; when its paths, its  
 shores,  
 And brooks were like a dream of novelty  
 To my half-infant thoughts; that very week,  
 While I was roving up and down alone, 431  
 Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to cross  
 One of those open fields, which, shaped like  
 ears,  
 Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's Lake:  
 Twilight was coming on, yet through the  
 gloom  
 Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore  
 A heap of garments, as if left by one  
 Who might have there been bathing. Long  
 I watched,  
 But no one owned them; meanwhile the  
 calm lake  
 Grew dark with all the shadows on its breast,  
 And, now and then, a fish up-leaping  
 snapped 441  
 The breathless stillness. The succeeding  
 day,  
 Those unclaimed garments telling a plain  
 tale  
 Drew to the spot an anxious crowd; some  
 looked  
 In passive expectation from the shore,  
 While from a boat others hung o'er the  
 deep,  
 Sounding with grappling irons and long  
 poles.  
 At last, the dead man, 'mid that beauteous  
 scene  
 Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright

Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre  
 shape 450  
 Of terror; yet no soul-debasing fear,  
 Young as I was, a child not nine years old,  
 Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen  
 Such sights before, among the shining  
 streams  
 Of faery land, the forest of romance.  
 Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle  
 With decoration of ideal grace;  
 A dignity, a smoothness, like the works  
 Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long pos-  
 sessed, 460  
 A little yellow, canvas-covered book,  
 A slender abstract of the Arabian tales;  
 And, from companions in a new abode,  
 When first I learnt, that this dear prize of  
 mine  
 Was but a block hewn from a mighty  
 quarry —  
 That there were four large volumes, laden  
 all  
 With kindred matter, 't was to me, in truth,  
 A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,  
 With one not richer than myself, I made  
 A covenant that each should lay aside 470  
 The moneys he possessed, and hoard up  
 more  
 Till our joint savings had amassed enough  
 To make this book our own. Through  
 several months,  
 In spite of all temptation, we preserved  
 Religiously that vow; but firmness failed,  
 Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's house  
 The holidays returned me, there to find  
 That golden store of books which I had  
 left,  
 What joy was mine! How often in the  
 course 480  
 Of those glad respites, though a soft west  
 wind  
 Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,  
 For a whole day together, have I lain  
 Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmur-  
 ing stream,  
 On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,  
 And there have read, devouring as I read,  
 Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!  
 Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,  
 Such as an idler deals with in his shame,  
 I to the sport betook myself again. 490

A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides,  
And o'er the heart of man; invisibly  
It comes, to works of unreprieved delight,  
And tendency benign, directing those  
Who care not, know not, think not, what  
they do.

The tales that charm away the wakeful night  
In Araby; romances; legends penned  
For solace by dim light of monkish lamps;  
Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised  
By youthful squires; adventures endless,  
spun 500

By the dismantled warrior in old age,  
Out of the bowels of those very schemes  
In which his youth did first extravagate;  
These spread like day, and something in  
the shape

Of these will live till man shall be no more.  
Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours,  
And *they must* have their food. Our child-  
hood sits,

Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne  
That hath more power than all the ele-  
ments.

I guess not what this tells of Being past, 510  
Nor what it augurs of the life to come;  
But so it is; and, in that dubious hour —  
That twilight — when we first begin to see  
This dawning earth, to recognise, expect,  
And, in the long probation that ensues,  
The time of trial, ere we learn to live  
In reconciliation with our stinted powers;  
To endure this state of meagre vassalage,  
Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,  
Uneasy and unsettled, yoke-fellows 520  
To custom, mettlesome, and not yet tamed  
And humbled down — oh! then we feel, we  
feel,

We know where we have friends. Ye  
dreamers, then,

Forgers of daring tales! we bless you then,  
Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape  
Philosophy will call you: *then* we feel  
With what, and how great might ye are in  
league,

Who make our wish, our power, our thought  
a deed,

An empire, a possession, — ye whom time  
And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom 530  
Earth crouches, the elements are potter's  
clay,

Space like a heaven filled up with northern  
lights,

Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere at  
once.

Relinquishing this lofty eminence  
For ground, though humbler, not the less a  
tract

Of the same isthmus, which our spirits  
cross

In progress from their native continent  
To earth and human life, the Song might  
dwell

On that delightful time of growing youth,  
When craving for the marvellous gives  
way 540

To strengthening love for things that we  
have seen;

When sober truth and steady sympathies,  
Offered to notice by less daring pens,  
Take firmer hold of us, and words them-  
selves

Move us with conscious pleasure.

I am sad

At thought of rapture now for ever flown;  
Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad  
To think of, to read over, many a page,  
Poems withal of name, which at that time  
Did never fail to entrance me, and are  
now 550

Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre  
Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice five  
years

Or less I might have seen, when first my  
mind

With conscious pleasure opened to the  
charm

Of words in tuneful order, found them  
sweet

For their own *sakes*, a passion, and a power;  
And phrases pleased me chosen for delight,  
For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public roads  
Yet unfrequented, while the morning light  
Was yellowing the hill tops, I went  
abroad 560

With a dear friend, and for the better part  
Of two delightful hours we strolled along  
By the still borders of the misty lake,  
Repeating favourite verses with one voice,  
Or conning more, as happy as the birds  
That round us chaunted. Well might we  
be glad,

Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,  
More bright than madness or the dreams  
of wine;

And, though full oft the objects of our love  
Were false, and in their splendour over-  
wrought, 570

Yet was there surely then no vulgar power  
Working within us, — nothing less, in truth,

Than that most noble attribute of man,  
Though yet untutored and inordinate,  
That wish for something loftier, more  
adorned,

Than is the common aspect, daily garb,  
Of human life. What wonder, then, if  
sounds

Of exultation echoed through the groves !  
For, images, and sentiments, and words,  
And everything encountered or pursued 580  
In that delicious world of poesy,  
Kept holiday, a never-ending show,  
With music, incense, festival, and flowers !

Here must we pause: this only let me  
add,  
From heart-experience, and in humblest  
sense

Of modesty, that he, who in his youth  
A daily wanderer among woods and fields  
With living Nature hath been intimate,  
Not only in that raw unpractised time  
Is stirred to ecstasy, as others are, 590  
By glittering verse; but further, doth re-  
ceive,

In measure only dealt out to himself,  
Knowledge and increase of enduring joy  
From the great Nature that exists in works  
Of mighty Poets. Visionary power  
Attends the motions of the viewless winds,  
Embodied in the mystery of words:  
There, darkness makes abode, and all the  
host

Of shadowy things work endless changes, —  
there,

As in a mansion like their proper home, 600  
Even forms and substances are circumfused  
By that transparent veil with light divine,  
And, through the turnings intricate of  
verse,

Present themselves as objects recognised,  
In flashes, and with glory not their own.

## BOOK SIXTH

## CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS

THE leaves were fading when to Esth-  
waite's banks  
And the simplicities of cottage life  
I bade farewell; and, one among the youth  
Who, summoned by that season, reunite  
As scattered birds troop to the fowler's lure,  
Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so  
prompt

Or eager, though as gay and undepressed  
In mind, as when I thence had taken flight  
A few short months before. I turned my  
face

Without repining from the coves and  
heights 10  
Clothed in the sunshine of the withering  
fern;

Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence  
Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and  
you,

Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumberland,  
You and your not unwelcome days of mirth,  
Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,  
And in my own unlovely cell sate down  
In lightsome mood — such privilege has  
youth

That cannot take long leave of pleasant  
thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society 20  
Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived  
More to myself. Two winters may be  
passed

Without a separate notice: many books  
Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously  
perused,

But with no settled plan. I was detached  
Internally from academic cares;  
Yet independent study seemed a course  
Of hardy disobedience toward friends  
And kindred, proud rebellion and unkind.

This spurious virtue, rather let it bear 30  
A name it now deserves, this cowardice,  
Gave treacherous sanction to that over-love  
Of freedom which encouraged me to turn  
From regulations even of my own  
As from restraints and bonds. Yet who  
can tell —

Who knows what thus may have been  
gained, both then

And at a later season, or preserved;  
What love of nature, what original strength  
Of contemplation, what intuitive truths  
The deepest and the best, what keen re-  
search, 40

Unbiased, unbewildered, and unawed ?

The Poet's soul was with me at that time;  
Sweet meditations, the still overflow  
Of present happiness, while future years  
Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,  
No few of which have since been realised;  
And some remain, hopes for my future life.  
Four years and thirty, told this very week,

Have I been now a sojourner on earth,  
 By sorrow not unsmitten; yet for me<sup>50</sup>  
 Life's morning radiance hath not left the  
   hills,<sup>4</sup>  
 Her dew is on the flowers. Those were  
   the days  
 Which also first emboldened me to trust  
 With firmness, hitherto but slightly touched  
 By such a daring thought, that I might  
   leave  
 Some monument behind me which pure  
   hearts  
 Should reverence. The instinctive humble-  
   ness,  
 Maintained even by the very name and  
   thought  
 Of printed books and authorship, began  
 To melt away; and further, the dread awe  
 Of mighty names was softened down and  
   seemed<sup>61</sup>  
 Approachable, admitting fellowship  
 Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,  
 Though not familiarly, my mind put on,  
 Content to observe, to achieve, and to enjoy.

All winter long, whenever free to choose,  
 Did I by night frequent the College grove  
 And tributary walks; the last, and oft  
 The only one, who had been lingering there  
 Through hours of silence, till the porter's  
   bell,<sup>70</sup>  
 A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,  
 Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice;  
 Inexorable summons! Lofty elms,  
 Inviting shades of opportune recess,  
 Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood  
 Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree  
 With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely  
   wreathed,  
 Grew there; an ash which Winter for him-  
   self  
 Deeked out with pride, and with outlandish  
   grace:  
 Up from the ground, and almost to the top,  
 The trunk and every master branch were  
   green<sup>81</sup>  
 With clustering ivy, and the lightsome twigs  
 And outer spray profusely tipped with seeds  
 That hung in yellow tassels, while the air  
 Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have I  
   stood  
 Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree  
 Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere  
 Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance  
 May never tread; but scarcely Spenser's self

Could have more tranquil visions in his  
   youth,<sup>90</sup>  
 Or could more bright appearances create  
 Of human forms with superhuman powers,  
 Than I beheld, loitering on calm clear  
   nights  
 Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant youth  
 'T were idle to descant. My inner judgment  
 Not seldom differed from my taste in books,  
 As if it appertained to another mind,  
 And yet the books which then I valued  
   most  
 Are dearest to me now; for, having scanned,  
 Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched the  
   forms<sup>101</sup>  
 Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed  
 A standard, often usefully applied,  
 Even when unconsciously, to things re-  
   moved  
 From a familiar sympathy. — In fine,  
 I was a better judge of thoughts than words,  
 Misled in estimating words, not only  
 By common inexperience of youth,  
 But by the trade in classic niceties,  
 The dangerous craft, of culling term and  
   phrase<sup>110</sup>  
 From languages that want the living voice  
 To carry meaning to the natural heart;  
 To tell us what is passion, what is truth,  
 What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook  
 The pleasure gathered from the rudiments  
 Of geometric science. Though advanced  
 In these enquiries, with regret I speak,  
 No farther than the threshold, there I found  
 Both elevation and composed delight:<sup>120</sup>  
 With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance  
   pleased  
 With its own struggles, did I meditate  
 On the relation those abstractions bear  
 To Nature's laws, and by what process led,  
 Those immaterial agents bowed their heads  
 Duly to serve the mind of earth-born man;  
 From star to star, from kindred sphere to  
   sphere,  
 From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source I  
   drew  
 A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense<sup>130</sup>  
 Of permanent and universal sway,  
 And paramount belief; there, recognised

A type, for finite natures, of the one  
Supreme Existence, the surpassing life  
Which — to the boundaries of space and  
time,

Of melancholy space and doleful time,  
Superior and incapable of change,  
Nor touched by welterings of passion — is,  
And hath the name of, God. Transcendent

peace 139  
And silence did await upon these thoughts  
That were a frequent comfort to my youth.

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters  
threw,  
With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck  
spared,

Upon a desert coast, that having brought  
To land a single volume, saved by chance,  
A treatise of Geometry, he went,  
Although of food and clothing destitute,  
And beyond common wretchedness de-  
pressed,

To part from company and take this book  
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its  
truths) 150

To spots remote, and draw his diagrams  
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus  
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost  
Forget his feeling: so (if like effect  
From the same cause produced, 'mid out-  
ward things

So different, may rightly be compared),  
So was it then with me, and so will be  
With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm  
Of those abstractions to a mind beset  
With images and haunted by herself, 160  
And specially delightful unto me  
Was that clear synthesis built up aloft  
So gracefully; even then when it appeared  
Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy  
To sense embodied: not the thing it is  
In verity, an independent world,  
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine un-  
earned  
By aught, I fear, of genuine desert —  
Mine, of heaven's grace and inborn  
aptitudes. 170

And not to leave the story of that time  
Imperfect, with these habits must be joined,  
Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that loved  
A pensive sky, sad days, and piping winds,  
The twilight more than dawn, autumn than  
spring;

A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice  
And inclination mainly, and the mere  
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.

— To time thus spent, add multitudes of  
hours 179

Pilfered away, by what the Bard who sang  
Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called  
"Good-natured lounging," and behold a map  
Of my collegiate life — far less intense  
Than duty called for, or, without regard  
To duty, *might* have sprung up of itself  
By change of accidents, or even, to speak  
Without unkindness, in another place.

Yet why take refuge in that plea? — the  
fault,

This I repeat, was mine; mine be the blame.

In summer, making quest for works of  
art, 190

Or scenes renowned for beauty, I explored  
That streamlet whose blue current works  
its way

Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;  
Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden tracts  
Of my own native region, and was blest  
Between these sundry wanderings with a joy  
Above all joys, that seemed another morn  
Risen on mid noon; blest with the presence,  
Friend,

Of that sole Sister, her who hath been long  
Dear to thee also, thy true friend and mine,  
Now, after separation desolate, 201  
Restored to me — such absence that she  
seemed

A gift then first bestowed. The varied  
banks

Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,  
And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,  
Low standing by the margin of the stream,  
A mansion visited (as faine reports)  
By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,  
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might pen  
Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love 210  
Inspired; — that river and those mouldering  
towers

Have seen us side by side, when, having  
clomb

The darksome windings of a broken stair,  
And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,  
Not without trembling, we in safety looked  
Forth, through some Gothic window's open  
space,

And gathered with one mind a rich reward  
From the far-stretching landscape, by the  
light

Of morning beautified, or purple eve;  
 Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's  
 head, 220  
 Catching from tufts of grass and hare-bell  
 flowers  
 Their faintest whisper to the passing breeze,  
 Given out while mid-day heat oppressed the  
 plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed  
 A gladness o'er that season, then to me,  
 By her exulting outside look of youth  
 And placid under-countenance, first en-  
 deared;

That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now  
 So near to us, that meek confiding heart,  
 So revered by us both. O'er paths and  
 fields 230

In all that neighbourhood, through narrow  
 lanes

Of eglantine, and through the shady woods,  
 And o'er the Border Beacon, and the waste  
 Of naked pools, and common crags that lay  
 Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered  
 love,

The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden  
 gleam.

O Friend! we had not seen thee at that  
 time,

And yet a power is on me, and a strong  
 Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.  
 Far art thou wandered now in search of  
 health 240

And milder breezes, — melancholy lot!  
 But thou art with us, with us in the past,  
 The present, with us in the times to come.  
 There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,  
 No languor, no dejection, no dismay,  
 No absence scarcely can there be, for those  
 Who love as we do. Speed thee well! divide  
 With us thy pleasure; thy returning  
 strength,

Receive it daily as a joy of ours;  
 Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether gift  
 Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts. 251

I, too, have been a wanderer; but, alas!  
 How different the fate of different men.  
 Though mutually unknown, yea nursed and  
 reared

As if in several elements, we were framed  
 To bend at last to the same discipline,  
 Predestined, if two beings ever were,  
 To seek the same delights, and have one  
 health,

One happiness. Throughout this narrative,  
 Else sooner ended, I have borne in mind 260  
 For whom it registers the birth, and marks  
 the growth,

Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,  
 And joyous loves, that hallow innocent days  
 Of peace and self-command. Of rivers,  
 fields,

And groves I speak to thee, my Friend! to  
 thee,

Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the depths  
 Of the huge city, on the leaded roof  
 Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,  
 Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds \*  
 Moving in heaven; or, of that pleasure tired,  
 To shut thine eyes, and by internal light 271  
 See trees, and meadows, and thy native  
 stream,

Far distant, thus beheld from year to year  
 Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,

In this late portion of my argument,  
 That scarcely, as my term of pupillage  
 Ceased, had I left those academic bowers  
 When thou wert thither guided. From the  
 heart

Of London, and from cloisters there, thou  
 camest, 279

And didst sit down in temperance and peace,  
 A rigorous student. What a stormy course  
 Then followed. Oh! it is a pang that calls  
 For utterance, to think what easy change  
 Of circumstances might to thee have spared  
 A world of pain, ripened a thousand hopes,  
 For ever withered. Through this retrospect  
 Of my collegiate life I still have had  
 Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place  
 Present before my eyes, have played with  
 times

And accidents as children do with cards, 290  
 Or as a man, who, when his house is built,  
 A frame locked up in wood and stone, doth  
 still,

As impotent fancy prompts, by his fireside,  
 Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought  
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence,  
 And all the strength and plumage of thy  
 youth,

Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse  
 Among the schoolmen, and Platonic forms  
 Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out  
 From things well-matched or ill, and words  
 for things, 300

The self-created sustenance of a mind  
 Debarred from Nature's living images,  
 Compelled to be a life unto herself,

And unrelentingly possessed by thirst  
Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not alone,  
Ah! surely not in singleness of heart  
Should I have seen the light of evening fade  
From smooth Cam's silent waters: had we  
met,

Even at that early time, needs must I trust  
In the belief, that my maturer age, <sup>310</sup>  
My calmer habits, and more steady voice,  
Would with an influence benign have soothed,  
Or chased away, the airy wretchedness  
That battered on thy youth. But thou hast  
trod

A march of glory, which doth put to shame  
These vain regrets; health suffers in thee,  
else

Such grief for thee would be the weakest  
thought

That ever harboured in the breast of man.

A passing word erewhile did lightly  
touch

On wanderings of my own, that now em-  
braced <sup>320</sup>

With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from  
restraint,

A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,  
Not slow to share my wishes, took his staff,  
And sallying forth, we journeyed side by  
side,

Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy slight,  
Did this unprecedented course imply,  
Of college studies and their set rewards;  
Nor had, in truth, the scheme been formed  
by me

Without uneasy forethought of the pain, <sup>330</sup>  
The censures, and ill-omening, of those  
To whom my worldly interests were dear.  
But Nature then was sovereign in my mind,  
And mighty forms, seizing a youthful fancy,  
Had given a charter to irregular hopes.

In any age of uneventful calm  
Among the nations, surely would my heart  
Have been possessed by similar desire;  
But Europe at that time was thrilled with  
joy,

France standing on the top of golden  
hours, <sup>340</sup>

And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief  
looks

Cast on the white cliffs of our native shore

From the receding vessel's deck, we  
chanced

To land at Calais on the very eve  
Of that great federal day; and there we  
saw,

In a mean city, and among a few,  
How bright a face is worn when joy of one  
Is joy for tens of millions. Southward  
thence

We held our way, direct through hamlets,  
towns, <sup>350</sup>

Gaudy with reliques of that festival,  
Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,  
And window-garlands. On the public  
roads,

And, once, three days successively, through  
paths

By which our toilsome journey was  
abridged,

Among sequestered villages we walked  
And found benevolence and blessedness  
Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when  
spring

Hath left no corner of the land untouched;  
Where elms for many and many a league  
in files <sup>360</sup>

With their thin umbrage, on the stately  
roads

Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our  
heads,

For ever near us as we paced along:  
How sweet at such a time, with such de-  
light

On every side, in prime of youthful  
strength,

To feed a Poet's tender melancholy  
And fond conceit of sadness, with the sound  
Of undulations varying as might please

The wind that swayed them; once, and  
more than once,

Unhoused beneath the evening star we  
saw <sup>370</sup>

Dances of liberty, and, in late hours  
Of darkness, dances in the open air  
Deftly prolonged, though grey-haired  
lookers on

Might waste their breath in chiding.  
Under hills —

The vine-clad hills and slopes of Burgundy,  
Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone

We glided forward with the flowing stream.  
Swift Rhone! thou wert the wings on

which we cut  
A winding passage with majestic ease

Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting show



Those woods and farms and orchards did  
 present, 381  
 And single cottages and lurking towns,  
 Reach after reach, succession without end  
 Of deep and stately vales! A lonely pair  
 Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed  
 along  
 Clustered together with a merry crowd  
 Of those emancipated, a blithe host  
 Of travellers, chiefly delegates, returning  
 From the great spousals newly solemnised  
 At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.  
 Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay as  
 bees; 391  
 Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,  
 And with their swords flourished as if to  
 fight  
 The saucy air. In this proud company  
 We landed — took with them our evening  
 meal,  
 Guests welcome almost as the angels were  
 To Abraham of old. The supper done,  
 With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts  
 We rose at signal given, and formed a ring  
 And, hand in hand, danced round and  
 round the board; 400  
 All hearts were open, every tongue was  
 loud  
 With amity and glee; we bore a name  
 Honoured in France, the name of English-  
 men,  
 And hospitably did they give us hail,  
 As their forerunners in a glorious course;  
 And round and round the board we danced  
 again.  
 With these blithe friends our voyage we  
 renewed  
 At early dawn. The monastery bells  
 Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears;  
 The rapid river flowing without noise, 410  
 And each uprising or receding spire  
 Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals  
 Touching the heart amid the boisterous  
 crew  
 By whom we were encompassed. Taking  
 leave  
 Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side by  
 side,  
 Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued  
 Our journey, and ere twice the sun had  
 set  
 Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and  
 there  
 Rested within an awful *solitude* :  
 Yes; for even then no other than a place 420

Of soul-affecting *solitude* appeared  
 That far-famed region, though our eyes  
 had seen,  
 As toward the sacred mansion we advanced,  
 Arms flashing, and a military glare  
 Of riotous men commissioned to expel  
 The blameless inmates, and belike subvert  
 That frame of social being, which so long  
 Had bodied forth the ghostliness of things  
 In silence visible and perpetual calm.  
 — “Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!” —  
 The voice 430  
 Was Nature’s, uttered from her Alpine  
 throne;  
 I heard it then and seem to hear it now —  
 “Your impious work forbear, perish what  
 may,  
 Let this one temple last, be this one spot  
 Of earth devoted to eternity!”  
 She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno’s  
 pines  
 Waved their dark tops, not silent as they  
 waved,  
 And while below, along their several beds,  
 Murmured the sister streams of Life and  
 Death,  
 Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my  
 heart 440  
 Responded; “Honour to the patriot’s zeal!  
 Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!  
 Hail to the mighty projects of the time!  
 Discerning sword that Justice wields, do  
 thou  
 Go forth and prosper; and, ye purging  
 fires,  
 Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,  
 Fanned by the breath of angry Providence.  
 But oh! if Past and Future be the wings  
 On whose support harmoniously conjoined  
 Moves the great spirit of human knowledge,  
 spare 450  
 These courts of mystery, where a step ad-  
 vanced  
 Between the portals of the shadowy rocks  
 Leaves far behind life’s treacherous vani-  
 ties,  
 For penitential tears and trembling hopes  
 Exchanged — to equalise in God’s pure  
 sight  
 Monarch and peasant: be the house re-  
 deemed  
 With its unworldly votaries, for the sake  
 Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved  
 Through faith and meditative reason, rest-  
 ing

Upon the word of heaven - imparted  
truth, 460

Calmly triumphant; and for humbler claim  
Of that imaginative impulse sent  
From these majestic floods, yon shining  
cliffs,

The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,  
Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants,  
These forests unapproachable by death,  
That shall endure as long as man endures,  
To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,  
To struggle, to be lost within himself  
In trepidation, from the blank abyss 470  
To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled."  
Not seldom since that moment have I  
wished

That thou, O Friend! the trouble or the  
calm  
Hadst shared, when, from profane regards  
apart,

In sympathetic reverence we trod  
The floors of those dim cloisters, till that  
hour,

From their foundation, strangers to the  
presence

Of unrestricted and unthinking man.  
Abroad, how cheerily the sunshine lay  
Upon the open lawns! Vallombre's  
groves 480

Entering, we fed the soul with darkness;  
thence

Issued, and with uplifted eyes beheld,  
In different quarters of the bending sky,  
The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if  
Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there,  
Memorial revered by a thousand storms;  
Yet then, from the indiscriminating sweep  
And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.

"T is not my present purpose to retrace  
That variegated journey step by step. 490  
A march it was of military speed,  
And Earth did change her images and forms  
Before us, fast as clouds are changed in  
heaven.

Day after day, up early and down late,  
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to  
hill

Mounted — from province on to province  
swept,

Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,  
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship  
Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing  
fair: 499

Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life,

Enticing valleys, greeted them and left  
Too soon, while yet the very flash and  
gleam

Of salutation were not passed away.  
Oh! sorrow for the youth who could have  
seen,

Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, unraised  
To patriarchal dignity of mind,  
And pure simplicity of wish and will,  
Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,  
Pleased (though to hardship born, and com-  
passed round 509

With danger, varying as the seasons change),  
Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,  
Contented, from the moment that the dawn  
(Ah! surely not without attendant gleams  
Of soul-illumination) calls him forth  
To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,  
Whose evening shadows lead him to repose.

Well might a stranger look with bound-  
ing heart

Down on a green recess, the first I saw  
Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,  
Quiet and lorded over and possessed 520  
By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like  
tents

Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns  
And by the river side.

That very day,  
From a bare ridge we also first beheld  
Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and  
grieved

To have a soulless image on the eye  
That had usurped upon a living thought  
That never more could be. The wondrous  
Vale

Of Channouny stretched far below, and  
soon

With its dumb cataracts and streams of  
ice, 530

A motionless array of mighty waves,  
Five rivers broad and vast, made rich  
amends.

And reconciled us to realities;  
There small birds warble from the leafy  
trees,

The eagle soars high in the element,  
There doth the reaper bind the yellow  
sheaf,

The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,  
While Winter like a well-tamed lion walks,  
Descending from the mountain to make  
sport

Among the cottages by beds of flowers. 540

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,  
Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state  
Of intellect and heart. With such a book  
Before our eyes, we could not choose but  
read

Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain  
And universal reason of mankind,  
The truths of young and old. Nor, side by  
side

Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone  
Each with his humour, could we fail to  
abound

In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:  
Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake, 551  
And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,  
And sober posies of funereal flowers,  
Gathered among those solitudes sublime  
From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,  
Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries  
Mixed something of stern mood, an under-  
thirst

Of vigour seldom utterly allayed:  
And from that source how different a sad-  
ness 560

Would issue, let one incident make known.  
When from the Vallais we had turned, and  
clomb

Along the Simplon's steep and rugged road,  
Following a band of muleteers, we reached  
A halting-place, where all together took  
Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our  
guide,

Leaving us at the board; awhile we lin-  
gered,

Then paced the beaten downward way that  
led

Right to a rough stream's edge, and there  
broke off;

The only track now visible was one 570  
That from the torrent's further brink held  
forth

Conspicuous invitation to ascend  
A lofty mountain. After brief delay  
Crossing the unbridged stream, that road  
we took,

And clomb with eagerness, till anxious  
fears

Intruded, for we failed to overtake  
Our comrades gone before. By fortunate  
chance,

While every moment added doubt to doubt,  
A peasant met us, from whose mouth we  
learned

That to the spot which had perplexed us  
first 580

We must descend, and there should find the  
road,

Which in the stony channel of the stream  
Lay a few steps, and then along its banks;  
And, that our future course, all plain to  
sight,

Was downwards, with the current of that  
stream.

Loth to believe what we so grieved to hear,  
For still we had hopes that pointed to the  
clouds,

We questioned him again, and yet again;  
But every word that from the peasant's lips  
Came in reply, translated by our feelings,  
Ended in this, — *that we had crossed the*  
*Alps.* 591

Imagination — here the Power so called  
Through sad incompetence of human speech,  
That awful Power rose from the mind's  
abyss

Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,  
At once, some lonely traveller. I was lost;  
Halted without an effort to break through;  
But to my conscious soul I now can say —

"I recognise thy glory:" in such strength  
Of usurpation, when the light of sense 600  
Goes out, but with a flush that has revealed  
The invisible world, doth greatness make  
abode,

There harbours; whether we be young or  
old,

Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
Is with infinitude, and only there;  
With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
And something evermore about to be.

Under such banners militant, the soul  
Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no  
spoils 610

That may attest her prowess, blest in  
thoughts

That are their own perfection and reward,  
Strong in herself and in beatitude

That hides her, like the mighty flood of  
Nile

Poured from his fount of Abyssinian clouds  
To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensued  
Upon those tidings by the peasant given  
Was soon dislodged. Downwards we hur-  
ried fast,

And, with the half-shaped road which we  
 had missed, <sup>620</sup>  
 Entered a narrow chasm. The brook and  
 road  
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy strait,  
 And with them did we journey several hours  
 At a slow pace. The immeasurable height  
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
 And in the narrow rent at every turn  
 Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and for-  
 lorn,  
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
 sky,  
 The rocks that muttered close upon our  
 ears, <sup>630</sup>  
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
 way-side  
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
 The unfettered clouds and region of the  
 Heavens,  
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
 light—  
 Were all like workings of one mind, the  
 features  
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;  
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
 The types and symbols of Eternity,  
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
 end. <sup>640</sup>

That night our lodging was a house that  
 stood  
 Alone within the valley, at a point  
 Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent  
 swelled  
 The rapid stream whose margin we had  
 trod;  
 A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,  
 With high and spacious rooms, deafened  
 and stunned  
 By noise of waters, making innocent sleep  
 Lie melancholy among weary bones.

Uprisen betimes, our journey we re-  
 newed,  
 Led by the stream, ere noon-day magni-  
 fied <sup>650</sup>  
 Into a lordly river, broad and deep,  
 Dimpling along in silent majesty,  
 With mountains for its neighbours, and in  
 view  
 Of distant mountains and their snowy tops,  
 And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,

Fit resting-place for such a visitant.  
 Locarno! spreading out in width like  
 Heaven,  
 How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,  
 Bask in the sunshine of the memory;  
 And Como! thou, a treasure whom the  
 earth <sup>660</sup>  
 Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth  
 Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake  
 Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden  
 plots  
 Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed maids;  
 Thy lofty steepes, and pathways roofed with  
 vines,  
 Winding from house to house, from town  
 to town,  
 Sole link that binds them to each other;  
 walks,  
 League after league, and cloistral avenues,  
 Where silence dwells if music be not there:  
 While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,  
 Through fond ambition of that hour I  
 strove <sup>671</sup>  
 To chant your praise; nor can approach  
 you now  
 Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,  
 Where tones of Nature smoothed by learned  
 Art  
 May flow in lasting current. Like a breeze  
 Or sunbeam over your domain I passed  
 In motion without pause; but ye have  
 left  
 Your beauty with me, a serene accord  
 Of forms and colours, passive, yet endowed  
 In their submissiveness with power as sweet  
 And gracious, almost, might I dare to say,  
 As virtue is, or goodness; sweet as love, <sup>681</sup>  
 Or the remembrance of a generous deed,  
 Or mildest visitations of pure thought,  
 When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked  
 Religiously, in silent blessedness;  
 Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we ad-  
 vanced,  
 For two days' space, in presence of the  
 Lake,  
 That, stretching far among the Alps, as-  
 sumed <sup>690</sup>  
 A character more stern. The second night,  
 From sleep awakened, and misled by sound  
 Of the church clock telling the hours with  
 strokes  
 Whose import then we had not learned, we  
 rose

By moonlight, doubting not that day was  
nigh,

And that meanwhile, by no uncertain path,  
Along the winding margin of the lake,  
Led, as before, we should behold the scene  
Hushed in profound repose. We left the  
town

Of Gravedona with this hope; but soon <sup>700</sup>  
Were lost, bewildered among woods im-  
mense,

And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.  
An open place it was, and overlooked,  
From high, the sullen water far beneath,  
On which a dull red image of the moon  
Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form  
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to hour  
We sate and sate, wondering, as if the  
night

Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On the  
rock

At last we stretched our weary limbs for  
sleep, <sup>710</sup>

But *could not* sleep, tormented by the stings  
Of insects, which, with noise like that of  
noon,

Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown  
birds;

The mountains more by blackness visible  
And their own size, than any outward  
light;

The breathless wilderness of clouds; the  
clock

That told, with unintelligible voice,  
The widely parted hours; the noise of  
streams,

And sometimes rustling motions nigh at  
hand,

That did not leave us free from personal  
fear; <sup>720</sup>

And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that  
set

Before us, while she still was high in  
heaven;—

These were our food; and such a summer's  
night

Followed that pair of golden days that  
shed

On Como's Lake, and all that round it lay,  
Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid fare-  
well

To days, each offering some new sight, or  
fraught

With some untried adventure, in a course

Prolonged till sprinklings of autumnal  
snow <sup>730</sup>

Checked our unwearied steps. Let this  
alone

Be mentioned as a parting word, that not  
In hollow exultation, dealing out  
Hyperboles of praise comparative;

Not rich one moment to be poor for ever;  
Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind  
Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner

On outward forms—did we in presence  
stand

Of that magnificent region. On the front  
Of this whole Song is written that my  
heart <sup>740</sup>

Must, in such Temple, needs have offered  
up

A different worship. Finally, whate'er  
I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream  
That flowed into a kindred stream; a gale,  
Confederate with the current of the soul,

To speed my voyage; every sound or sight,  
In its degree of power, administered

To grandeur or to tenderness,—to the one  
Directly, but to tender thoughts by means  
Less often instantaneous in effect; <sup>750</sup>

Led me to these by paths that, in the main,  
Were more circuitous, but not less sure  
Duly to reach the point marked out by  
Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend! a glorious  
time,

A happy time that was; triumphant looks  
Were then the common language of all  
eyes;

As if awaked from sleep, the Nations hailed  
Their great expectancy: the fife of war

Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,  
A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.

We left the Swiss exulting in the fate <sup>761</sup>  
Of their near neighbours; and, when  
shortening fast

Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from home,  
We crossed the Brabant armies on the fret  
For battle in the cause of Liberty.

A stripling, scarcely of the household then  
Of social life, I looked upon these things

As from a distance; heard, and saw, and  
felt,

Was touched, but with no intimate concern;  
I seemed to move along them, as a bird <sup>770</sup>

Moves through the air, or as a fish pursues  
Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;

I wanted not that joy, I did not need

Such help; the ever-living universe,  
Turn where I might, was opening out its  
glories,  
And the independent spirit of pure youth  
Called forth, at every season, new delights,  
Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er  
green fields.

## BOOK SEVENTH

## RESIDENCE IN LONDON

Six changeful years have vanished since I  
first  
Poured out (saluted by that quickening  
breeze  
Which met me issuing from the City's  
walls)  
A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang  
Aloud, with fervour irresistible  
Of short-lived transport, like a torrent  
bursting,  
From a black thunder-cloud, down Scafell's  
side  
To rush and disappear. But soon broke  
forth  
(So willed the Muse) a less impetuous  
stream,  
That flowed awhile with unabating strength,  
Then stopped for years; not audible again  
Before last primrose-time. Belov'd Friend!  
The assurance which then cheered some  
heavy thoughts  
On thy departure to a foreign land  
Has failed; too slowly moves the promised  
work.  
Through the whole summer have I been at  
rest,  
Partly from voluntary holiday,  
And part through outward hindrance. But  
I heard,  
After the hour of sunset yester-even,  
Sitting within doors between light and  
dark,  
A choir of redbreasts gathered somewhere  
near  
My threshold, — minstrels from the distant  
woods  
Sent in on Winter's service, to announce,  
With preparation artful and benign,  
That the rough lord had left the surly  
North  
On his accustomed journey. The delight,  
Due to this timely notice, unawares  
Smote me, and, listening, I in whispers said,

"Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will be  
Associates, and, unscared by blustering  
winds,  
Will chant together." Thereafter, as the  
shades<sup>30</sup>  
Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied  
A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume  
Or canopy of yet unwithered fern,  
Clear-shining, like a hermit's taper seen  
Through a thick forest. Silence touched  
me here  
No less than sound had done before; the  
child  
Of Summer, lingering, shining, by herself,  
The voiceless worm on the unfrequented  
hills,  
Seemed sent on the same errand with the  
choir<sup>40</sup>  
Of Winter that had warbled at my door,  
And the whole year breathed tenderness  
and love.

The last night's genial feeling overflowed  
Upon this morning, and my favourite grove,  
Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs aloft,  
As if to make the strong wind visible,  
Wakes in me agitations like its own,  
A spirit friendly to the Poet's task,  
Which we will now resume with lively hope,  
Nor checked by aught of tamer argument  
That lies before us, needful to be told. 51

Returned from that excursion, soon I bade  
Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats  
Of gown'd students, quitted hall and  
bower,  
And every comfort of that privileged  
ground,  
Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among  
The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life  
I should adhere, and seeming to possess  
A little space of intermediate time<sup>60</sup>  
At full command, to London first I turned,  
In no disturbance of excessive hope,  
By personal ambition unenslaved,  
Frugal as there was need, and, though  
self-willed,  
From dangerous passions free. Three  
years had flown  
Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock  
Of the huge town's first presence, and had  
paced  
Her endless streets, a transient visitant:

Now, fixed amid that concourse of mankind  
Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly, <sup>70</sup>  
And life and labour seem but one, I filled  
An idler's p'ce; an idler well content  
To have a house (what matter for a home ?)  
That owned him; living cheerfully abroad  
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,  
And all my young affections out of doors.

There was a time when whatsoe'er is  
feigned

Of airy palaces, and gardens built  
By Genii of romance; or hath in grave  
Authentic history been set forth of Rome,  
Alcaïro, Babylon, or Persepolis; <sup>81</sup>  
Or given upon report by pilgrim friars,  
Of golden cities ten months' journey deep  
Among Tartarian wilds — fell short, far

short,  
Of what my fond simplicity believed  
And thought of London — held me by a  
chain

Less strong of wonder and obscure delight.  
Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy shot  
For me beyond its ordinary mark,

'T were vain to ask; but in our flock of  
boys <sup>90</sup>

Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom  
chance

Summoned from school to London; fortunate

And envied traveller! When the Boy  
returned,

After short absence, curiously I scanned  
His mien and person, nor was free, in sooth,  
From disappointment, not to find some  
change

In look and air, from that new region  
brought,

As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned  
him;

And every word he uttered, on my ears  
Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note, <sup>100</sup>  
That answers unexpectedly awry,  
And mocks the prompter's listening. Mar-  
vellous things

Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears  
Almost as deeply seated and as strong  
In a Child's heart as fear itself) conceived  
For my enjoyment. Would that I could  
now

Recall what then I pictured to myself,  
Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,  
The King, and the King's Palace, and, not  
last,

Nor least, Heaven bless him! the renowned  
Lord Mayor. <sup>110</sup>

Dreams not unlike to those which once begat  
A change of purpose in young Whittington,  
When he, a friendless and a drooping boy,  
Sate on a stone, and heard the bells speak  
out

Articulate music. Above all, one thought  
Baffled my understanding: how men lived  
Even next-door neighbours, as we say, yet  
still

Strangers, not knowing each the other's  
name.

Oh, wondrous power of words, by simple  
faith <sup>119</sup>

Licensed to take the meaning that we love!  
Vauxhall and Ranelagh! I then had heard  
Of your green groves, and wilderness of  
lamps

Dimming the stars, and fireworks magical,  
And gorgeous ladies, under splendid domes,  
Floating in dance, or warbling high in air  
The songs of spirits! Nor had Fancy  
fed

With less delight upon that other class  
Of marvels, broad-day wonders permanent:  
The River proudly bridged; the dizzy top  
And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's; the  
tombs <sup>130</sup>

Of Westminster; the Giants of Guildhall;  
Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at the  
gates,

Perpetually recumbent; Statues — man,  
And the horse under him — in gilded pomp  
Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid vast  
squares;

The Monument, and that Chamber of the  
Tower

Where England's sovereigns sit in long  
array,

Their steeds bestriding, — every mimic  
shape

Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch  
wore,

Whether for gorgeous tournament ad-  
dressed, <sup>140</sup>

Or life or death upon the battle-field.

Those bold imaginations in due time

Had vanished, leaving others in their stead:

And now I looked upon the living scene;

Familiarly perused it; oftentimes,

In spite of strongest disappointment, pleased

Through courteous self-submission, as a tax

Paid to the object by prescriptive right.

Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the plain  
 Of a too busy world ! Before me flow, <sup>150</sup>  
 Thou endless stream of men and moving things !  
 Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes —  
 With wonder heightened, or sublimed by awe —  
 On strangers, of all ages; the quick dance  
 Of colours, lights, and forms; the deafening din;  
 The comers and the goers face to face,  
 Face after face; the string of dazzling wares,  
 Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned names,  
 And all the tradesman's honours overhead:  
 Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page, <sup>160</sup>  
 With letters huge inscribed from top to toe,  
 Stationed above the door, like guardian saints;  
 There, allegoric shapes, female or male,  
 Or physiognomies of real men,  
 Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the sea,  
 Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the attractive head  
 Of some quack-doctor, famous in his day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at length,  
 Escaped as from an enemy, we turn  
 Abruptly into some sequestered nook, <sup>170</sup>  
 Still as a sheltered place when winds blow loud !  
 At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin resort,  
 And sights and sounds that come at intervals,  
 We take our way. A raree-show is here,  
 With children gathered round; another street  
 Presents a company of dancing dogs,  
 Or dromedary, with an antic pair  
 Of monkeys on his back; a minstrel band  
 Of Savoyards; or, single and alone,  
 An English ballad-singer. Private courts,  
 Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes <sup>181</sup>  
 Thrilled by some female vendor's scream, belike  
 The very shrillest of all London cries,  
 May then entangle our impatient steps;  
 Conducted through those labyrinths, un-  
 awares,  
 To privileged regions and inviolate,

Where from their airy lodges studious lawyers  
 Look out on waters, walks, and gardens green.

Thence back into the throng, until we reach,  
 Following the tide that slackens by degrees,  
 Some half-frequented scenes, where wider streets <sup>191</sup>  
 Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.  
 Here files of ballads dangle from dead walls;  
 Advertisements, of giant-size, from high  
 Press forward, in all colours, on the sight;  
 These, bold in conscious merit, lower down;  
*That*, fronted with a most imposing word,  
 Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.  
 As on the broadening causeway we advance,  
 Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and strong <sup>200</sup>  
 In lineaments, and red with over-toil.  
 'Tis one encountered here and everywhere;  
 A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut short,  
 And stumping on his arms. In sailor's garb  
 Another lies at length, beside a range  
 Of well-formed characters, with chalk inscribed  
 Upon the smooth flat stones: the Nurse is here,  
 The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,  
 The military Idler, and the Dame,  
 That field-ward takes her walk with decent steps. <sup>210</sup>  
 Now homeward through the thickening hubbub, where  
 See, among less distinguishable shapes,  
 The begging scavenger, with hat in hand;  
 The Italian, as he thrids his way with care,  
 Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images  
 Upon his head; with basket at his breast  
 The Jew; the stately and slow-moving Turk,  
 With freight of slippers piled beneath his arm !  
 Enough; — the mighty concourse I surveyed  
 With no unthinking mind, well pleased to note <sup>220</sup>  
 Among the crowd all specimens of man,  
 Through all the colours which the sun bestows,  
 And every character of form and face:  
 The Swede, the Russian; from the genial south,



The Frenchman and the Spaniard; from remote

America, the Hunter-Indian; Moors, Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese, And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns.

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day to day,

The spectacles within doors, — birds and beasts <sup>230</sup>

Of every nature, and strange plants convened

From every clime; and, next, those sights that ape

The absolute presence of reality, Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land, And what earth is, and what she has to show.

I do not here allude to subtlest craft, By means refined attaining purest ends, But imitations, fondly made in plain Confession of man's weakness and his loves. Whether the Painter, whose ambitious skill

Submits to nothing less than taking in <sup>241</sup>

A whole horizon's circuit, do with power, Like that of angels or commissioned spirits,

Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle, Or in a ship on waters, with a world

Of life, and life-like mockery beneath, Above, behind, far stretching and before;

Or more mechanic artist represent By scale exact, in model, wood or clay, <sup>249</sup>

From blended colours also borrowing help, Some miniature of famous spots or things, —

St. Peter's Church; or, more aspiring aim, In microscopic vision, Rome herself;

Or, haply, some choice rural haunt, — the Falls

Of Tivoli; and, high upon that steep, The Sibyl's mouldering Temple! every tree,

Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks Throughout the landscape; tuft, stone

scratch minute — All that the traveller sees when he is there.

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still, Others of wider scope, where living men, Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes, <sup>262</sup> Diversified the allurements. Need I fear To mention by its name, as in degree, Lowest of these and humblest in attempt, Yet richly graced with honours of her own, Half-rural Sadler's Wells? Though at that time

Intolerant, as is the way of youth

Unless itself be pleased, here more than once <sup>269</sup>

Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add, With ample recompense) giants and dwarfs, Clowns, conjurors, posture-masters, harlequins,

Amid the uproar of the rabblement, Perform their feats. Nor was it mean delight

To watch crude Nature work in untaught minds;

To note the laws and progress of belief; Though obstinate on this way, yet on that How willingly we travel, and how far!

To have, for instance, brought upon the scene <sup>279</sup>

The champion, Jack the Giant-killer: Lo! He dons his coat of darkness; on the stage Walks, and achieves his wonders, from the eye

Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."

Delusion bold! and how can it be wrought? The garb he wears is black as death, the word

"Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

Here, too, were "forms and pressures of the time,"

Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed When Art was young; dramas of living men, <sup>290</sup>

And recent things yet warm with life; a sea-fight,

Shipwreck, or some domestic incident Divulged by Truth and magnified by Fame;

Such as the daring brotherhood of late Set forth, too serious theme for that light

place — I mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn

From our own ground, — the Maid of Buttermere, —

And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife Deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came

And wooed the artless daughter of the hills, And wedded her, in cruel mockery <sup>301</sup>

Of love and marriage bonds. These words to thee

Must needs bring back the moment when we first,

Ere the broad world rang with the maiden's name,

Beheld her serving at the cottage inn; Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew, With admiration of her modest mien

And carriage, marked by unexampled grace.  
 We since that time not unfamiliarly  
 Have seen her, — her discretion have observed,  
 Her just opinions, delicate reserve,  
 Her patience, and humility of mind  
 Unspoiled by commendation and the excess  
 Of public notice — an offensive light  
 To a meek spirit suffering inwardly.

From this memorial tribute to my theme  
 I was returning, when, with sundry forms  
 Conmingled — shapes which met me in the way

That we must tread — thy image rose again,  
 Maiden of Butternere! She lives in peace  
 Upon the spot where she was born and reared;  
 Without contamination doth she live  
 In quietness, without anxiety:  
 Beside the mountain chapel, sleeps in earth  
 Her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb  
 That, thither driven from some unsheltered place,

Rests underneath the little rock-like pile  
 When storms are raging. Happy are they both —

Mother and child! — These feelings, in themselves

Trite, do yet scarcely seem so when I think  
 On those ingenuous moments of our youth  
 Ere we have learnt by use to slight the crimes

And sorrows of the world. Those simple days

Are now my theme; and, foremost of the scenes,

Which yet survive in memory, appears  
 One, at whose centre sate a lovely Boy,  
 A sportive infant, who, for six months' space,

Not more, had been of age to deal about  
 Articulate prattle — Child as beautiful  
 As ever clung around a mother's neck,  
 Or father fondly gazed upon with pride.  
 There, too, conspicuous for stature tall  
 And large dark eyes, beside her infant stood  
 The mother; but, upon her cheeks diffused,  
 False tints too well accorded with the glare  
 From play-house lustres thrown without reserve

On every object near. The Boy had been  
 The pride and pleasure of all lookers-on  
 In whatsoever place, but seemed in this  
 A sort of alien scattered from the clouds.  
 Of lusty vigour, more than infantine

He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose  
 Just three parts blown — a cottage-child —  
 if e'er,

By cottage-door on breezy mountain-side,  
 Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a babe

By Nature's gifts so favoured. Upon a board

Decked with refreshments had this child been placed,

His little stage in the vast theatre,  
 And there he sate, surrounded with a throng

Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute men  
 And shameless women, treated and caressed;

Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses played,

While oaths and laughter and indecent speech

Were rife about him as the songs of birds  
 Contending after showers. The mother now

Is fading out of memory, but I see  
 The lovely Boy as I beheld him then

Among the wretched and the falsely gay,  
 Like one of those who walked with hair unsinged

Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and spells  
 Muttered on black and spiteful instigation  
 Have stopped, as some believe, the kindest growths.

Ah, with how different spirit might a prayer  
 Have been preferred, that this fair creature, checked

By special privilege of Nature's love,  
 Should in his childhood be detained for ever!

But with its universal freight the tide  
 Hath rolled along, and this bright innocent,  
 Mary! may now have lived till he could look

With envy on thy nameless babe that sleeps,  
 Beside the mountain chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then been told

Since, travelling southward from our pastoral hills,

I heard, and for the first time in my life,  
 The voice of woman utter blasphemy —  
 Saw woman as she is, to open shame  
 Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;  
 I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once  
 Thrown in that from humanity divorced

Humanity, splitting the race of man 390  
In twain, yet leaving the same outward  
form.

Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,  
And ardent meditation. Later years  
Brought to such spectacle a milder sadness,  
Feelings of pure commiseration, grief  
For the individual and the overthrow  
Of her soul's beauty; farther I was then  
But seldom led, or wished to go; in truth  
The sorrow of the passion stopped me  
there.

But let me now, less moved, in order  
take 400

Our argument. Enough is said to show  
How casual incidents of real life,  
Observed where pastime only had been  
sought,

Outweighed, or put to flight, the set events  
And measured passions of the stage, albeit  
By Siddons trod in the fulness of her power.  
Yet was the theatre my dear delight;

The very gilding, lamps and painted scrolls,  
And all the mean upholstery of the place,  
Wanted not animation, when the tide 410  
Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast  
With the ever-shifting figures of the scene,  
Solemn or gay: whether some beauteous  
dame

Advanced in radiance through a deep recess  
Of thick entangled forest, like the moon  
Opening the clouds; or sovereign king,  
announced

With flourishing trumpet, came in full-  
blown state

Of the world's greatness, winding round  
with train

Of courtiers, banners, and a length of  
guards;

Or captive led in abject weeds, and jin-  
gling 420

His slender manacles; or romping girl  
Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air; or  
mumbling sire,

A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed up  
In all the tatters of infirmity  
All loosely put together, hobbled in,  
Stumping upon a cane with which he smites,  
From time to time, the solid boards, and  
makes them

Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabout  
Of one so overloaded with his years.

But what of this! the laugh, the grin, gri-  
mace, 430

The antics striving to outstrip each other,  
Were all received, the least of them not  
lost,

With an unmeasured welcome. Through  
the night,

Between the show, and many-headed mass  
Of the spectators, and each several nook  
Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly  
And with what flashes, as it were, the mind  
Turned this way — that way! sportive and  
alert

And watchful, as a kitten when at play,  
While winds are eddying round her, among  
straws 440

And rustling leaves. Enchanting age and  
sweet!

Romantic almost, looked at through a space,  
How small, of intervening years! For then,  
Though surely no mean progress had been  
made

In meditations holy and sublime,  
Yet something of a girlish child-like gloss  
Of novelty survived for scenes like these;  
Enjoyment haply handed down from times  
When at a country-playhouse, some rude  
barn

Tricked out for that proud use, if I per-  
chance 450

Caught, on a summer evening through a  
chink

In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse  
Of daylight, the bare thought of where I  
was

Gladdden me more than if I had been led  
Into a dazzling cavern of romance,  
Crowded with Genii busy among works  
Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detains us now may  
seem,

To many, neither dignified enough  
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by  
them, 460

Who, looking inward, have observed the  
ties

That bind the perishable hours of life  
Each to the other, and the curious props  
By which the world of memory and thought  
Exists and is sustained. More lofty themes,  
Such as at least do wear a prouder face,  
Solicit our regard; but when I think  
Of these, I feel the imaginative power  
Languish within me; even then it slept,  
When, pressed by tragic sufferings, the  
heart 470

Was more than full; amid my sobs and tears

It slept, even in the pregnant season of youth.

For though I was most passionately moved  
And yielded to all changes of the scene  
With an obsequious promptness, yet the storm

Passed not beyond the suburbs of the mind;  
Save when realities of act and mien,  
The incarnation of the spirits that move  
In harmony amid the Poet's world,  
Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth 480  
By power of contrast, made me recognise,  
As at a glance, the things which I had shaped,

And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely seen,

When, having closed the mighty Shakespeare's page,

I mused, and thought, and felt, in solitude.

Pass we from entertainments, that are such

Professedly, to others titled higher,  
Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,  
More near akin to those than names imply, —

I mean the brawls of lawyers in their courts  
Before the ermined judge, or that great stage 491

Where senators, tongue-favoured men, perform,

Admired and envied. Oh! the beating heart,

When one among the prince of these rose up, —

One, of whose name from childhood we had heard

Familiarly, a household term, like those,  
The Bedfords, Glosters, Salsburys, of old,  
Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence! hush!

This is no trifter, no short-flighted wit,  
No stammerer of a minute, painfully 500  
Delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked  
The Hours, like young Aurora, to his car:  
Thrice welcome Presence! how can patience e'er

Grow weary of attending on a track  
That kindles with such glory! All are charmed,

Astonished; like a hero in romance,  
He winds away his never-ending horn;

Words follow words, sense seems to follow sense:

What memory and what logic! till the strain

Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed, 509  
Grows tedious even in a young man's ear.

Genius of Burke! forgive the pen seduced

By specious wonders, and too slow to tell  
Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered men,

Beginning to mistrust their boastful guides,  
And wise men, willing to grow wiser, caught,

Rapt auditors! from thy most eloquent tongue —

Now mute, for ever mute in the cold grave.  
I see him, — old, but vigorous in age, —

Stand like an oak whose stag-horn branches start 520

Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe  
The younger brethren of the grove. But some —

While he forewarns, denounces, launches forth,

Against all systems built on abstract rights,  
Keen ridicule; the majesty proclaims  
Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by time;  
Declares the vital power of social ties  
Endeared by Custom; and with high disdain,

Exploding upstart Theory, insists  
Upon the allegiance to which men are born — 530

Some — say at once a froward multitude —  
Murmur (for truth is hated, where not loved)

As the winds fret within the Æolian cave,  
Galled by their monarch's chain. The times were big

With ominous change, which, night by night, provoked

Keen struggles, and black clouds of passion raised;

But memorable moments intervened,  
When Wisdom, like the Goddess from Jove's brain,

Broke forth in armour of resplendent words,  
Startling the Synod. Could a youth, and one 540

In ancient story versed, whose breast had heaved

Under the weight of classic eloquence,  
Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired?

Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail  
To achieve its higher triumph. Not unfelt  
Were its admonishments, nor lightly heard  
The awful truths delivered thence by  
tongues

Endowed with various power to search the  
soul;

Yet ostentation, domineering, oft  
Poured forth harangues, how sadly out of  
place! — 550

There have I seen a comely bachelor,  
Fresh from a toilette of two hours, ascend  
His rostrum, with seraphic glance look up,  
And, in a tone elaborately low  
Beginning, lead his voice through many a  
maze

A minuet course; and, winding up his  
mouth,

From time to time, into an orifice  
Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,  
And only not invisible, again  
Open it out, diffusing thence a smile 560  
Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.

Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,  
Moses, and he who penned, the other day,  
The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the  
Bard

Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy theme  
With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,  
And Ossian (doubt not — 't is the naked  
truth)

Summoned from streamy Morven — each  
and all

Would, in their turns, lend ornaments and  
flowers

To entwine the crook of eloquence that  
helped 570

This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the plains,  
To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glance but at a few conspicuous marks,  
Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,  
Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop, "  
In public room or private, park or street,  
Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,  
Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,  
Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,  
And all the strife of singularity, 580  
Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense —  
Of these, and of the living shapes they  
wear,

There is no end. Such candidates for re-  
gard,

Although well pleased to be where they  
were found,

I did not hunt after, nor greatly prize,  
Nor made unto myself a secret boast  
Of reading them with quick and curious  
eye;

But, as a common produce, things that are  
To-day, to-morrow will be, took of them  
Such willing note, as, on some errand bound  
That asks not speed, a traveller might be-  
stow 591

On sea-shells that bestrew the sandy beach,  
Or daisies swarming through the fields of  
June.

But foolishness and madness in parade,  
Though most at home in this their dear  
domain,

Are scattered everywhere, no rarities,  
Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.  
Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep  
In memory, those individual sights  
Of courage, or integrity, or truth, 600  
Or tenderness, which there, set off by foil,  
Appeared more touching. One will I se-  
lect —

A Father -- for he bore that sacred  
name; —

Him saw I, sitting in an open square,  
Upon a corner-stone of that low wall,  
Wherein were fixed the iron pales that  
fenced

A spacious grass-plot; there, in silence,  
sate

This One Man, with a sickly babe out-  
stretched

Upon his knee, whom he had thither  
brought

For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher  
air. 610

Of those who passed, and me who looked at  
him,

He took no heed; but in his brawny arms  
(The Artificer was to the elbow bare,  
And from his work this moment had been  
stolen)

He held the child, and, bending over it,  
As if he were afraid both of the sun  
And of the air, which he had come to seek,  
Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.

As the black storm upon the mountain top  
Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so 620  
That huge fermenting mass of human-kind  
Serves as a solemn back-ground, or relief,  
To single forms and objects, whence they  
draw,

For feeling and contemplative regard,  
More than inherent liveliness and power.  
How oft, amid those overflowing streets,  
Have I gone forward with the crowd, and  
said

Unto myself, "The face of every one  
That passes by me is a mystery!"  
Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look, op-  
pressed 630

By thoughts of what and whither, when  
and how,

Until the shapes before my eyes became  
A second-sight procession, such as glides  
Over still mountains, or appears in dreams;  
And once, far-travelled in such mood, be-  
yond

The reach of common indication, lost  
Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten  
Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)  
Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,  
Stood, propped against a wall, upon his  
chest 640

Wearing a written paper, to explain  
His story, whence he came, and who he  
was.

Caught by the spectacle my mind turned  
round

As with the might of waters; and apt type  
This label seemed of the utmost we can  
know,

Both of ourselves and of the universe;  
And, on the shape of that unmoving man,  
His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I  
gazed,

As if admonished from another world.

Though reared upon the base of outward  
things, 650

Structures like these the excited spirit  
mainly

Builds for herself; scenes different there  
are,

Full-formed, that take, with small internal  
help,

Possession of the faculties, — the peace  
That comes with night; the deep solemnity  
Of nature's intermediate hours of rest,  
When the great tide of human life stands  
still:

The business of the day to come, unborn,  
Of that gone by, locked up, as in the grave;  
The blended calmness of the heavens and  
earth, 660

Moonlight and stars, and empty streets, and  
sounds

Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours  
Of winter evenings, when unwholesome  
rains

Are falling hard, with people yet astir,  
The feeble salutation from the voice  
Of some unhappy woman, now and then  
Heard as we pass, when no one looks about,  
Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,  
Are falsely catalogued; things that are, are  
not,

As the mind answers to them, or the  
heart 670

Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say you,  
then,

To times, when half the city shall break  
out

Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or  
fear?

To executions, to a street on fire,  
Mobs, riots, or rejoicings? From these  
sights

Take one, — that ancient festival, the Fair,  
Holden where martyrs suffered in past  
time,

And named of St. Bartholomew; there, see  
A work completed to our hands, that lays,  
If any spectacle on earth can do, 680  
The whole creative powers of man  
asleep! —

For once, the Muse's help will we implore,  
And she shall lodge us, wafted on her  
wings,

Above the press and danger of the crowd,  
Upon some showman's platform. What a  
shock

For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din,  
Barbarian and infernal, — a phantasma,  
Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight,  
sound!

Below, the open space, through every nook  
Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive 690

With heads; the midway region, and above,  
Is thronged with staring pictures and huge  
scrolls,

Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies;  
With chattering monkeys dangling from  
their poles,

And children whirling in their roundabouts;  
With those that stretch the neck and strain  
the eyes,

And crack the voice in rivalry, the crowd  
Inviting; with buffoons against buffoons

Grimacing, writhing, screaming, — him who  
grinds

The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves, 700

Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-drum,  
 And him who at the trumpet puffs his cheeks,  
 The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,  
 Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and boys,  
 Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-towering plumes. —  
 All moveables of wonder, from all parts,  
 Are here — Albinos, painted Indians, Dwarfs,  
 The Horse of knowledge, and the learned Pig,  
 The Stone-eater, the man that swallows fire,  
 Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,  
 The Bust that speaks and moves its goggling eyes, 711  
 The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the marvellous craft  
 Of modern Merlins, Wild Beasts, Puppet-shows,  
 All out-o'-the-way, far-fetched, perverted things,  
 All freaks of nature, all Promethean thoughts  
 Of man, his dulness, madness, and their feats  
 All jumbled up together, to compose  
 A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and Booths  
 Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast mill,  
 Are vomiting, receiving on all sides, 720  
 Men, Women, three-years' Children, Babes in arms.

Oh, blank confusion! true epitome  
 Of what the mighty City is herself,  
 To thousands upon thousands of her sons,  
 Living amid the same perpetual whirl  
 Of trivial objects, melted and reduced  
 To one identity, by differences  
 That have no law, no meaning, and no end —  
 Oppression, under which even highest minds  
 Must labour, whence the strongest are not free. 730  
 But though the picture weary out the eye,  
 By nature an unmanageable sight,  
 It is not wholly so to him who looks  
 In steadiness, who hath among least things  
 An under-sense of greatest; sees the parts

As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.  
 This, of all acquisitions, first awaits  
 On sundry and most widely different modes  
 Of education, nor with least delight  
 On that through which I passed. Attention springs, 740  
 And comprehensiveness and memory flow,  
 From early converse with the works of God  
 Among all regions; chiefly where appear  
 Most obviously simplicity and power.  
 Think, how the everlasting streams and woods,  
 Stretched and still stretching far and wide, exalt  
 The roving Indian, on his desert sands:  
 What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnant show  
 Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab's eye:  
 And, as the sea propels, from zone to zone, 750  
 Its currents; magnifies its shoals of life  
 Beyond all compass; spreads, and sends aloft  
 Armies of clouds, — even so, its powers and aspects  
 Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed,  
 The views and aspirations of the soul  
 To majesty. Like virtue have the forms.  
 Perennial of the ancient hills; nor less  
 The changeful language of their countenances  
 Quickens the slumbering mind, and aids the thoughts,  
 However multitudinous, to move 760  
 With order and relation. This, if still,  
 As hitherto, in freedom I may speak,  
 Not violating any just restraint,  
 As may be hoped, of real modesty, —  
 This did I feel, in London's vast domain.  
 The Spirit of Nature was upon me there;  
 The soul of Beauty and enduring Life  
 Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused,  
 Through meagre lines and colours, and the press  
 Of self-destroying, transitory things, 770  
 Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

## BOOK EIGHTH

## RETROSPECT — LOVE OF NATURE LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN

WHAT sounds are those, Helvellyn, that are heard  
 Up to thy summit, through the depth of air

Ascending, as if distance had the power  
To make the sounds more audible? What  
crowd

Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village green?  
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,  
Though but a little family of men,  
Shepherds and tillers of the ground — be-  
times

Assembled with their children and their  
wives,

And here and there a stranger interspersed.  
They hold a rustic fair — a festival, 11  
Such as, on this side now, and now on that,  
Repeated through his tributary vales,  
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,  
Sees annually, if clouds towards either  
ocean

Blown from their favourite resting-place, or  
mists

Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded  
head.

Delightful day it is for all who dwell  
In this secluded glen, and eagerly  
They give it welcome. Long ere heat of  
noon, 20

From byre or field the kine were brought;  
the sheep

Are penned in cotes; the chaffering is  
begun.

The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice  
Of a new master; bleat the flocks aloud.  
Booths are there none; a stall or two is  
here;

A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,  
The other to make music; hither, too,  
From far, with basket, slung upon her arm,  
Of hawker's wares — books, pictures, combs,  
and pins —

Some aged woman finds her way again, 30  
Year after year, a punctual visitant!  
There also stands a speech-maker by rote,  
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-show;  
And in the lapse of many years may come  
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he  
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie hid.  
But one there is, the loveliest of them all,  
Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out  
For gains, and who that sees her would not  
buy?

Fruits of her father's orchard are her wares,  
And with the ruddy produce she walks  
round 41

Among the crowd, half pleased with, half  
ashamed

Of, her new office, blushing restlessly.

The children now are rich, for the old to-day  
Are generous as the young; and, if content  
With looking on, some ancient wedded pair  
Sit in the shade together; while they gaze,  
"A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled  
brow,

The days departed start again to life,  
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,  
Faint, but more tranquil, like the changing  
sun 51

To him who slept at noon and wakes at eve."  
Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,  
Spreading from young to old, from old to  
young,

And no one seems to want his share. —  
Immense

Is the recess, the circumambient world  
Magnificent, by which they are embraced:  
They move about upon the soft green turf:  
How little they, they and their doings,  
seem,

And all that they can further or obstruct!  
Through utter weakness pitifully dear, 61  
As tender infants are: and yet how great!  
For all things serve them: them the morn-  
ing light

Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;  
And them the silent rocks, which now from  
high

Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;  
The wild brooks prattling from invisible  
haunts;

And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir  
Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel, 70  
In that enormous City's turbulent world  
Of men and things, what benefit I owed  
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,  
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart  
Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair  
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand  
trees,

Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight  
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed  
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous, 79  
China's stupendous mound) by patient toil  
Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;  
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,  
Fulfilling (could enchantment have done  
more?)

A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with  
domes

Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells  
For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts



With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,  
Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught  
to melt

Into each other their obsequious hues,  
Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase, 90  
Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth  
In no discordant opposition, strong  
And gorgeous as the colours side by side  
Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;  
And mountains over all, embracing all;  
And all the landscape, endlessly enriched  
With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise  
Where I was reared; in Nature's primitive  
gifts

Favoured no less, and more to every sense  
Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky, 101  
The elements, and seasons as they change,  
Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there —  
Man free, man working for himself, with  
choice

Of time, and place, and object; by his  
wants,

His comforts, native occupations, cares,  
Cheerfully led to individual ends  
Or social, and still followed by a train  
Unwooded, unthought-of even — simplicity,  
And beauty, and inevitable grace. 110

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial  
bowers

Would to a child be transport over-great,  
When but a half-hour's roam through such  
a place

Would leave behind a dance of images,  
That shall break in upon his sleep for weeks;  
Even then the common haunts of the green  
earth,

And ordinary interests of man,  
Which they embosom, all without regard  
As both may seem, are fastening on the  
heart

Insensibly, each with the other's help. 120  
For me, when my affections first were led  
From kindred, friends, and playmates, to  
partake

Love for the human creature's absolute self,  
That noticeable kindness of heart  
Sprang out of fountains, there abounding  
most,

Where sovereign Nature dictated the tasks  
And occupations which her beauty adorned,  
And Shepherds were the men that pleased  
me first;

Not such as Saturn ruled 'mid Latian wilds,  
With arts and laws so tempered, that their  
lives 130

Left, even to us toiling in this late day,  
A bright tradition of the golden age;  
Not such as, 'mid Arcadian fastnesses  
Sequestered, handed down among them-  
selves

Felicity, in Grecian song renowned;  
Nor such as — when an adverse fate had  
driven,

From house and home, the courtly band  
whose fortunes

Entered, with Shakspeare's genius, the wild  
woods

Of Arden — amid sunshine or in shade  
Culled the best fruits of Time's uncounted  
hours, 140

Ere Phæbe sighed for the false Ganymede;  
Or there where Perdita and Florizel  
Together danced, Queen of the feast, and  
King;

Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,  
That I had heard (what he perhaps had  
seen)

Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far  
Their May-bush, and along the streets in  
flocks

Parading with a song of taunting rhymes,  
Aimed at the laggards slumbering within  
doors;

Had also heard, from those who yet remem-  
bered, 150

Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreaths  
that decked

Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and of  
youths,

Each with his maid, before the sun was up,  
By annual custom, issuing forth in troops,  
To drink the waters of some sainted well,  
And hang it round with garlands. Love  
survives;

But, for such purpose, flowers no longer  
grow:

The times, too sage, perhaps too proud,  
have dropped

These lighter graces; and the rural ways  
And manners which my childhood looked  
upon 160

Were the unluxuriant produce of a life  
Intent on little but substantial needs,  
Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt.  
But images of danger and distress,  
Man suffering among awful Powers and  
Forms;

Of this I heard, and saw enough to make  
Imagination restless; nor was free  
Myself from frequent perils; nor were tales  
Wanting, — the tragedies of former times,  
Hazards and strange escapes, of which the  
                rocks                         170  
Immutable, and everflowing streams,  
Where'er I roamed, were speaking monu-  
                ments.

Smooth life had flock and shepherd in  
old time,  
Long springs and tepid winters, on the  
banks  
Of delicate Galesus; and no less  
Those scattered along Adria's myrtle  
shores:

Smooth life had herdsman, and his snow-  
white herd  
To triumphs and to sacrificial rites  
Devoted, on the inviolable stream  
Of rich Clitumnus; and the goat-herd  
lived

As calmly, underneath the pleasant brows  
Of cool Lucrētis, where the pipe was heard  
Of Pan, Invisible God, thrilling the rocks  
With tutelary music, from all harm  
The fold protecting. I myself, mature  
In manhood then, have seen a pastoral tract  
Like one of these, where Fancy might run  
wild,

Though under skies less generous, less  
serene:  
There, for her own delight had Nature  
framed

A pleasure-ground, diffused a fair ex-  
 Of level pasture, islanded with groves  
 And banked with woody risings; but the  
 Plain

Endless, here opening widely out, and there  
Shut up in lesser lakes or beds of lawn  
And intricate recesses, creek or bay  
Sheltered within a shelter, where at large  
The shepherd strays, a rolling hut his  
home.

Thither he comes with spring-time, there  
abides

All summer, and at sunrise ye may hear  
His flageolet to liquid notes of love 700  
Attuned, or sprightly fife resounding far.  
Nook is there none, nor tract of that vast  
space

Where passage opens, but the same shall have

In turn its visitant, telling there his hours  
In unlaborious pleasure, with no task  
More toilsome than to carve a beechen  
bowl

For spring or fountain, which the traveller  
finds,

When through the region he pursues at will

His devious course. A glimpse of such  
sweet life

I saw when, from the melancholy walls      210  
Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed

My daily walk along that wide champaign,  
That, reaching to her gates, spreads east

And northwards, from beneath the moun-

tainous verge  
Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to you

Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye hollow vales,

Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's  
voice,

Powers of my native region! Ye that  
seize

The heart with firmer grasp ! Your snows  
and streams

Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds,  
That howl so dismally for him who treads

Companionless your awful solitudes !  
There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter

There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter  
long  
To wait upon the storms: of their approach

Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives  
His flock, and thither from the homestead

This rock, and thither from the homestead  
 bears  
 A toilsome burden up the craggy ways

A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,  
And deals it out, their regular nourishment  
Strewn on the frozen snow— And when the

Look out, and all the pastures dance with  
spring

Looks out, and all the pastures dance with  
lamb,  
And when the flock, with warm moon weather

And when the flock, with warmer weather,  
climbs  
Higher and higher, his eagle leads

Higher and higher, him his office leads  
To watch their goings, whatsoever track  
The world can show. For this he sits

The wanderers choose. For this he quits  
his home

At day-spring, and no sooner doth the sun  
Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,

Than he lies down upon some shining rock  
And breakfasts with his dog. When they

As is their wont, a pittance from strict

time,  
For rest not needed or exchange of love, 24

Then from his couch he starts; and now  
 his feet  
 Crush out a livelier fragrance from the  
 flowers  
 Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill en-  
 wrought  
 In the low turf: the lingering dew of  
 morn  
 Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he  
 hies,  
 His staff pretending like a hunter's spear,  
 Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,  
 And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged  
 streams.  
 Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call,  
 Might deign to follow him through what  
 he does 250  
 Or sees in his day's march; himself he  
 feels,  
 In those vast regions where his service lies,  
 A freeman, wedded to his life of hope  
 And hazard, and hard labour interchanged  
 With that majestic indolence so dear  
 To native man. A rambling schoolboy,  
 thus,  
 I felt his presence in his own domain,  
 As of a lord and master, or a power,  
 Or genius, under Nature, under God,  
 Presiding; and severest solitude 260  
 Had more commanding looks when he was  
 there.  
 When up the lonely brooks on rainy days  
 Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills  
 By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes  
 Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,  
 In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,  
 His sheep like Greenland bears; or, as he  
 stepped  
 Beyond the boundary line of some hill-  
 shadow,  
 His form hath flashed upon me, glorified  
 By the deep radiance of the setting sun: 270  
 Or him have I descried in distant sky,  
 A solitary object and sublime,  
 Above all height! like an aerial cross  
 Stationed alone upon a spiry rock  
 Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus was  
 man  
 Ennobled outwardly before my sight,  
 And thus my heart was early introduced  
 To an unconscious love and reverence  
 Of human nature; hence the human form  
 To me became an index of delight, 280  
 Of grace and honour, power and worthi-  
 ness.

Meanwhile this creature — spiritual almost  
 As those of books, but more exalted far;  
 Far more of an imaginative form  
 Than the gay Corin of the groves, who  
 lives  
 For his own fancies, or to dance by the  
 hour,  
 In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst —  
 Was, for the purposes of kind, a man  
 With the most common; husband, father;  
 learned,  
 Could teach, admonish; suffered with the  
 rest 290  
 From vice and folly, wretchedness and  
 fear;  
 Of this I little saw, cared less for it,  
 But something must have felt.  
 Call ye these appearances —  
 Which I beheld of shepherds in my youth,  
 This sanctity of Nature given to man —  
 A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore  
 On the dead letter, miss the spirit of  
 things;  
 Whose truth is not a motion or a shape  
 Instinct with vital functions, but a block  
 Or waxen image which yourselves have  
 made, 300  
 And ye adore! But blessed be the God  
 Of Nature and of Man that this was so;  
 That men before my inexperienced eyes  
 Did first present themselves thus purified,  
 Removed, and to a distance that was fit:  
 And so we all of us in some degree  
 Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,  
 And howsoever; were it otherwise,  
 And we found evil fast as we find good  
 In our first years, or think that it is  
 found, 310  
 How could the innocent heart bear up and  
 live!  
 But doubly fortunate my lot; not here  
 Alone, that something of a better life  
 Perhaps was round me than it is the privi-  
 lege  
 Of most to move in, but that first I looked  
 At Man through objects that were great or  
 fair;  
 First communed with him by their help.  
 And thus  
 Was founded a sure safeguard and defence  
 Against the weight of meanness, selfish  
 cares,  
 Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that beat  
 in 320  
 On all sides from the ordinary world

In which we traffic. Starting from this  
point

I had my face turned toward the truth,  
began

With an advantage furnished by that kind  
Of prepossession, without which the soul  
Receives no knowledge that can bring forth  
good,

No genuine insight ever comes to her.  
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes  
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,  
Happy, and now most thankful that my  
walk

Was guarded from too early intercourse 330  
With the deformities of crowded life,  
And those ensuing laughs and contempts,  
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to  
think

With a due reverence on earth's rightful  
lord,

Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,  
Will not permit us; but pursue the mind,  
That to devotion willingly would rise,  
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

Yet deem not, Friend! that human kind  
with me 340

Thus early took a place pre-eminent;  
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,  
But secondary to my own pursuits  
And animal activities, and all  
Their trivial pleasures; and when these had  
drooped

And gradually expired, and Nature, prized  
For her own sake, became my joy, even  
then —

And upwards through late youth, until not  
less

Than two-and-twenty summers had been  
told —

Was Man in my affections and regards 350  
Subordinate to her, her visible forms  
And viewless agencies: a passion, she,  
A rapture often, and immediate love  
Ever at hand; he, only a delight  
Occasional, an accidental grace,

His hour being not yet come. Far less had  
then

The inferior creatures, beast or bird, at-  
tuned

My spirit to that gentleness of love,  
(Though they had long been carefully ob-  
served),

Won from me those minute obeisances 360  
Of tenderness, which I may number now

With my first blessings. Nevertheless, on  
these

The light of beauty did not fall in vain,  
Or grandeur circumscribe them to no end.

But when that first poetic faculty  
Of plain Imagination and severe,  
No longer a mute influence of the soul,  
Ventured, at some rash Muse's earnest call,  
To try her strength among harmonious  
words;

And to book-notions and the rules of art 370  
Did knowingly conform itself; there came  
Among the simple shapes of human life  
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit;  
And Nature and her objects beautified  
These fictions, as in some sort, in their turn,  
They burnished her. From touch of this  
new power

Nothing was safe: the elder-tree that grew  
Beside the well-known charnel-house had  
then

A dismal look: the yew-tree had its ghost,  
That took his station there for ornament:  
The dignities of plain occurrence then 380  
Were tasteless, and truth's golden mean, a  
point

Where no sufficient pleasure could be found.  
Then, if a widow, staggering with the blow  
Of her distress, was known to have turned  
her steps

To the cold grave in which her husband  
slept,

One night, or haply more than one, through  
pain

Or half-insensate impotence of mind,  
The fact was caught at greedily, and there  
She must be visitant the whole year through,  
Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might pur-  
sue 392

These cravings; when the foxglove, one by  
one,

Upwards through every stage of the tall  
stem,

Had shed beside the public way its bells,  
And stood of all dismantled, save the last  
Left at the tapering ladder's top, that  
seemed

To bend as doth a slender blade of grass  
Tipped with a rain-drop, Fancy loved to  
seat,

Beneath the plant despoiled, but crested still  
With this last relic, soon itself to fall, 400

Some vagrant mother, whose arch little  
ones,

All unconcerned by her dejected plight,  
Laughed as with rival eagerness their hands  
Gathered the purple cups that round them  
lay,

Strewing the turf's green slope.

A diamond light  
(Whene'er the summer sun, declining,  
smote

A smooth rock wet with constant springs)  
was seen

Sparkling from out a copse-clad bank that  
rose

Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the hearth  
Seated, with open door, often and long 411

Upon this restless lustre have I gazed,  
That made my fancy restless as itself.

'T was now for me a burnished silver shield  
Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay  
Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood:

An entrance now into some magic cave  
Or palace built by fairies of the rock;

Nor could I have been bribed to disen-  
chant

The spectacle, by visiting the spot. 420

Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood,  
Engrafted far-fetched shapes on feelings  
bred

By pure Imagination: busy Power  
She was, and with her ready pupil turned

Instinctively to human passions, then  
Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fervent

swarm

Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich  
As mine was through the bounty of a grand

And lovely region, I had forms distinct 429

To steady me: each airy thought revolved

Round a substantial centre, which at once  
Incited it to motion, and controlled.

I did not pine like one in cities bred,

As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend!

Great Spirit as thou art, in endless dreams  
Of sickness, disjoining, joining, things

Without the light of knowledge. Where  
the harm,

If, when the woodman languished with dis-  
ease

Induced by sleeping nightly on the ground  
Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise, 440

I called the pangs of disappointed love,  
And all the sad etcetera of the wrong,

To help him to his grave? Meanwhile the  
man,

If not already from the woods retired

To die at home, was haply, as I knew,  
Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle airs,  
Birds, running streams, and hills so beauti-  
ful

On golden evenings, while the charcoal pile  
Breathed up its smoke, an image of his ghost  
Or spirit that full soon must take her flight.

Nor shall we not be tending towards that  
point 451

Of sound humanity to which our Tale  
Leads, though by sinuous ways, if here I  
show

How Fancy, in a season when she wove  
Those slender cords, to guide the uncon-  
scious Boy

For the Man's sake, could feed at Nature's  
call

Some pensive musings which might well  
besem

Maturer years.

A grove there is whose boughs  
Stretch from the western marge of Thur-  
stommere,

With length of shade so thick, that whoso  
glides 460

Along the line of low-roofed water, moves  
As in a cloister. Once — while, in that  
shade

Loitering, I watched the golden beams of  
light

Flung from the setting sun, as they reposed  
In silent beauty on the naked ridge

Of a high eastern hill — thus flowed my  
thoughts

In a pure stream of words fresh from the  
heart:

Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall  
close

My mortal course, there will I think on  
you; 469

Dying, will cast on you a backward look;  
Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vale

Is no where touched by one memorial  
gleam)

Doth with the fond remains of his last  
power

Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds,  
On the dear mountain-tops where first he  
rose.

Enough of humble arguments; recall,  
My Song! those high emotions which thy  
voice

Has heretofore made known; that bursting  
forth

Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,  
When everywhere a vital pulse was felt, 480  
And all the several frames of things, like  
stars,

Through every magnitude distinguishable,  
Shone mutually indebted, or half lost  
Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy  
Of life and glory. In the midst stood  
Man,

Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,  
As, of all visible natures, crown, though  
born

Of dust, and kindred to the worm; a Being,  
Both in perception and discernment, first  
In every capability of rapture, 490  
Through the divine effect of power and  
love;

As, more than anything we know, instinct  
With godhead, and, by reason and by will,  
Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left, I  
moved,  
Begirt, from day to day, with temporal  
shapes

Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,  
Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,  
Manners and characters discriminate,  
And little bustling passions that eclipse, 500  
As well they might, the impersonated  
thought,  
The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An idler among academic bowers,  
Such was my new condition, as at large  
Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar  
light

Of present, actual, superficial life,  
Gleaming through colouring of other times,  
Old usages and local privilege,  
Was welcomed, softened, if not solemnised.  
This notwithstanding, being brought more  
near 510

To vice and guilt, forerunning wretchedness,  
I trembled, — thought, at times, of human  
life

With an indefinite terror and dismay,  
Such as the storms and angry elements  
Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim  
Analogy to uproar and misrule,  
Disquiet, danger, and obscurity.

It might be told (but wherefore speak of  
things  
Common to all ?) that, seeing, I was led

Gravely to ponder — judging between good  
And evil, not as for the mind's delight 521  
But for her guidance — one who was to  
act,

As sometimes to the best of feeble means  
I did, by human sympathy impelled:  
And, through dislike and most offensive  
pain,

Was to the truth conducted; of this faith  
Never forsaken, that, by acting well,  
And understanding, I should learn to love  
The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress ! for at  
times 530

Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;  
London, to thee I willingly return.

Erewhile my verse played idly with the  
flowers

Enwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied  
With that amusement, and a simple look  
Of child-like inquisition now and then  
Cast upwards on thy countenance, to de-  
tect

Some inner meanings which might harbour  
there.

But how could I in mood so light in-  
dulge,

Keeping such fresh remembrance of the  
day, 540

When, having thriddled the long labyrinth  
Of the suburban villages, I first  
Entered thy vast dominion ? On the roof  
Of an itinerant vehicle I sat,  
With vulgar men about me, trivial forms  
Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and  
things, —

Mean shapes on every side: but, at the  
instant,

When to myself it fairly might be said,  
The threshold now is overpast, (how strange  
That aught external to the living mind 550  
Should have such mighty sway ! yet so it  
was),

A weight of ages did at once descend  
Upon my heart; no thought embodied, no  
Distinct remembrances, but weight and  
power, —

Power growing under weight: alas ! I feel  
That I am trifling: 't was a moment's  
pause, —

All that took place within me came and  
went

As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,  
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

The curious traveller, who, from open day,  
Hath passed with torches into some huge  
cave, 561

The Grotto, of Antiparos, or the Den  
In old time haunted by that Danish Witch,  
Yordas; he looks around and sees the vault  
Widening on all sides; sees, or thinks he  
sees,

Erelong, the massy roof above his head,  
That instantly unsettles and recedes, —  
Substance and shadow, light and darkness,  
all

Commingled, making up a canopy  
Of shapes and forms and tendencies to shape  
That shift and vanish, change and inter-  
change 571

Like spectres, — ferment silent and sublime !  
That after a short space works less and less,  
Till, every effort, every motion gone,  
The scene before him stands in perfect view  
Exposed, and lifeless as a written book ! —  
But let him pause awhile, and look again,  
And a new quickening shall succeed, at  
first

Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,  
Till the whole cave, so late a senseless mass,  
Busies the eye with images and forms 581  
Boldly assembled, — here is shadowed forth  
From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,  
A variegated landscape, — there the shape  
Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail,  
The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,  
Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his staff :  
Strange congregation ! yet not slow to meet  
Eyes that perceive through minds that can  
inspire.

Even in such sort had I at first been  
moved, 590  
Nor otherwise continued to be moved,  
As I explored the vast metropolis,  
Fount of my country's destiny and the  
world's;  
That great emporium, chronicle at once  
And burial-place of passions, and their home  
Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it did  
Of past and present, such a place must  
needs  
Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at  
that time  
Far less than craving power; yet knowledge  
came, 600  
Sought or unsought, and influxes of power

Came, of themselves, or at her call derived  
In fits of kindest apprehensiveness,  
From all sides, when whate'er was in itself  
Capacious found, or seemed to find, in me  
A correspondent amplitude of mind;  
Such is the strength and glory of our youth !  
The human nature unto which I felt  
That I belonged, and revered with love,  
Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit  
Diffused through time and space, with aid  
derived 611

Of evidence from monuments, erect,  
Prostrate, or leaning towards their common  
rest

In earth, the widely scattered wreck sublime  
Of vanished nations, or more clearly drawn  
From books and what they picture and  
record.

"T is true, the history of our native land —  
With those of Greece compared and popular  
Rome,

And in our high-wrought modern narratives  
Strip of their harmonising soul, the life 620  
Of manners and familiar incidents —  
Had never much delighted me. And less  
Than other intellects had mine been used  
To lean upon extrinsic circumstance  
Of record or tradition; but a sense  
Of what in the Great City had been done  
And suffered, and was doing, suffering, still,  
Weighed with me, could support the test of  
thought;

And, in despite of all that had gone by,  
Or was departing never to return, 630  
There I conversed with majesty and power  
Like independent natures. Hence the place  
Was thronged with impregnations like the  
Wilds

In which my early feelings had been  
nursed —

Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns, rocks,  
And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,  
Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed crags  
That into music touch the passing wind.  
Here then my young imagination found  
No uncongenial element; could here 640  
Among new objects serve or give command,  
Even as the heart's occasions might re-  
quire,

To forward reason's else too-scrupulous  
march.

The effect was, still more elevated views  
Of human nature. Neither vice nor guilt,  
Debasement undergone by body or mind,

Nor all the misery forced upon my sight,  
Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes  
scanned

Most feelingly, could overthrow my trust  
In what we *may* become; induce belief 650  
That I was ignorant, had been falsely  
taught,

A solitary, who with vain conceits  
Had been inspired, and walked about in  
dreams.

From those sad scenes when meditation  
turned,

Lo! everything that was indeed divine  
Retained its purity inviolate,  
Nay brighter shone, by this portentous  
gloom

Set off; such opposition as aroused  
The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise  
Though fallen from bliss, when in the East  
he saw 660

Darkness ere day's mid course, and morn-  
ing light

More orient in the western cloud, that drew  
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
Descending slow with something heavenly  
fraught.

Add also, that among the multitudes  
Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen  
Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere  
Is possible, the unity of man,  
One spirit over ignorance and vice  
Predominant, in good and evil hearts; 670  
One sense for moral judgments, as one eye  
For the sun's light. The soul when smit-  
ten thus

By a sublime *idea*, whence soe'er  
Vouchsafed for union or communion, feeds  
On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with  
God.

Thus from a very early age, O Friend!  
My thoughts by slow gradations had been  
drawn

To human-kind, and to the good and ill  
Of human life: Nature had led me on;  
And oft amid the "busy hum" I seemed  
To travel independent of her help, 681  
As if I had forgotten her; but no,  
The world of human-kind outweighed not  
hers

In my habitual thoughts: the scale of love,  
Though filling daily, still was light, com-  
pared  
With that in which *her* mighty objects lay.

## BOOK NINTH

## RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

EVEN as a river, — partly (it might seem)  
Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed  
In part by fear to shape a way direct,  
That would engulf him soon in the raven-  
ous sea —

Turns, and will measure back his course,  
far back,

Seeking the very regions which he crossed  
In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!  
Turned and returned with intricate delay.  
Or as a traveller, who has gained the brow  
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts  
For breathing-time, is tempted to review 11

The region left behind him; and, if aught  
Deserving notice have escaped regard,  
Or been regarded with too careless eye,  
Strives, from that height, with one and yet  
one more

Last look, to make the best amends he  
may:

So have we lingered. Now we start afresh  
With courage, and new hope risen on our  
toil.

Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,  
Whene'er it comes! needful in work so  
long, 20

Thrice needful to the argument which now  
Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,  
I ranged at large, through London's wide  
domain,

Month after month. Obscurely did I live,  
Not seeking frequent intercourse with men,  
By literature, or elegance, or rank,  
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus  
spent

Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,  
With less regret for its luxurious pomp, 30  
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,  
Than for the humble book-stalls in the  
streets,  
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I turned.

France lured me forth; the realm that I  
had crossed

So lately, journeying toward the snow-clad  
Alps.

But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,  
And all enjoyment which the summer sun  
Sheds round the steps of those who meet  
the day



With motion constant as his own, I went  
 Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town, 40  
 Washed by the current of the stately Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course,  
 and there  
 Sojourning a few days, I visited  
 In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,  
 The latter chiefly; from the field of Mars  
 Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,  
 And from Mont Martre southward to the  
 Dome  
 Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous  
 Halls,  
 The National Synod and the Jacobins,  
 I saw the Revolutionary Power 50  
 Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by  
 storms;  
 The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace  
 huge  
 Of Orleans; coasted round and round the  
 line  
 Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and  
 Shop,  
 Great rendezvous of worst and best, the  
 walk  
 Of all who had a purpose, or had not;  
 I stared and listened, with a stranger's  
 ears,  
 To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!  
 And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,  
 In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look 60  
 Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to  
 wear,  
 But seemed there present; and I scanned  
 them all,  
 Watched every gesture uncontrollable,  
 Of anger, and vexation, and despite,  
 All side by side, and struggling face to  
 face,  
 With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the  
 dust  
 Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,  
 And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,  
 And pocketed the relic, in the guise 70  
 Of an enthusiast: yet, in honest truth,  
 I looked for something that I could not find,  
 Affecting more emotion than I felt;  
 For 'tis most certain, that these various  
 sights,  
 However potent their first shock, with me  
 Appeared to recompense the traveller's  
 pains

Less than the painted Magdalene of Le  
 Brun,  
 A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair  
 Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful  
 cheek 79  
 Pale and bedropped with overflowing tears.

But hence to my more permanent abode  
 I hasten; there, by novelties in speech,  
 Domestic manners, customs, gestures, looks,  
 And all the attire of ordinary life,  
 Attention was engrossed; and, thus amused,  
 I stood 'mid those concussions, unconcerned,  
 Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower  
 Glased in a green-house, or a parlour  
 shrub  
 That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,  
 While every bush and tree, the country  
 through, 90  
 Is shaking to the roots: indifference this  
 Which may seem strange: but I was un-  
 prepared  
 With needful knowledge, had abruptly  
 passed  
 Into a theatre, whose stage was filled  
 And busy with an action far advanced.  
 Like others, I had skimmed, and some-  
 times read  
 With care, the master pamphlets of the  
 day;  
 Nor wanted such half-insight as grew wild  
 Upon that meagre soil, helped out by talk  
 And public news; but having never seen  
 A chronicle that might suffice to show 101  
 Whence the main organs of the public  
 power  
 Had sprung, their transmigrations, when  
 and how  
 Accomplished, giving thus unto events  
 A form and body; all things were to me  
 Loose and disjointed, and the affections  
 left  
 Without a vital interest. At that time,  
 Moreover, the first storm was overblown,  
 And the strong hand of outward violence  
 Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear 110  
 Now, in connection with so great a theme,  
 To speak (as I must be compelled to do)  
 Of one so unimportant; night by night  
 Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,  
 Whom, in the city, privilege of birth  
 Sequestered from the rest, societies  
 Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed;  
 Whence, and from deeper causes, all dis-  
 course

Of good and evil of the time was shunned  
 With scrupulous care; but these restric-  
     tions soon 120  
 Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew  
 Into a noisier world, and thus ere long  
 Became a patriot; and my heart was all  
 Given to the people, and my love was  
     theirs.

A band of military Officers,  
 Then stationed in the city, were the chief  
 Of my associates: some of these wore  
     swords

That had been seasoned in the wars, and  
     all

Were men well-born; the chivalry of  
     France.

In age and temper differing, they had yet  
 One spirit ruling in each heart; alike 131  
 (Save only one, hereafter to be named)  
 Were bent upon undoing what was done:  
 This was their rest and only hope; there-  
     with

No fear had they of bad becoming worse,  
 For worst to them was come; nor would  
     have stirred,

Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to  
     stir,

In anything, save only as the act  
 Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by  
     years,

Was in the prime of manhood, and cre-  
     while 140

He had sate lord in many tender hearts;  
 Though heedless of such honours now, and  
     changed:

His temper was quite mastered by the  
     times,

And they had blighted him, had eaten away  
 The beauty of his person, doing wrong  
 Alike to body and to mind: his port,  
 Which once had been erect and open, now  
 Was stooping and contracted, and a face,  
 Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts  
 Of symmetry and light and bloom, ex-  
     pressed, 150

As much as any that was ever seen,  
 A ravage out of season, made by thoughts  
 Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,  
 That from the press of Paris duly brought  
 Its freight of public news, the fever came,  
 A punctual visitant, to shake this man,  
 Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow  
     cheek

Into a thousand colours; while he read,

Or mused, his sword was haunted by his  
     touch

Continually, like an uneasy place 160

In his own body. 'T was in truth an hour  
 Of universal ferment; mildest men

Were agitated; and commotions, strife

Of passion and opinion, filled the walls

Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.

The soil of common life was, at that time,

Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,

And not then only, "What a mockery  
     this

Of history, the past and that to come!

Now do I feel how all men are deceived, 170

Reading of nations and their works, in  
     faith,

Faith given to vanity and emptiness;

Oh! laughter for the page that would re-  
     flect

To future times the face of what now  
     is!"

The land all swarmed with passion, like a  
     plain

Devoured by locusts, — Carra, Gorsas, —  
     add

A hundred other names, forgotten now,

Nor to be heard of more; yet they were  
     powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by  
     day,

And felt through every nook of town and  
     field. 180

Such was the state of things. Mean-  
     while the chief

Of my associates stood prepared for flight

To augment the band of emigrants in arms

Upon the borders of the Rhine, and leagued

With foreign foes mustered for instant  
     war.

This was their undisguised intent, and they

Were waiting with the whole of their de-  
     sires

The moment to depart.

An Englishman,

Born in a land whose very name appeared  
 To license some unruliness of mind; 190

A stranger, with youth's further privilege,

And the indulgence that a half-learn't  
     speech

Wins from the courteous; I, who had been  
     else

Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived

With these defenders of the Crown, and  
     talked,

And heard their notions; nor did they disdain  
The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by books  
To reason well of polity or law,  
And nice distinctions, then on every tongue,  
Of natural rights and civil; and to acts  
Of nations and their passing interests  
(If with unworldly ends and aims compared)  
Almost indifferent, even the historian's tale  
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized  
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart  
Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair forms,  
Old heroes and their sufferings and their deeds;  
Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp  
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found  
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,  
That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned  
And ill could brook, beholding that the best  
Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which yet  
Retaineth more of ancient homeliness,  
Than any other nook of English ground,  
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,  
Through the whole tenor of my school-day time,  
The face of one, who, whether boy or man,  
Was vested with attention or respect  
Through claims of wealth or blood; nor was it least  
Of many benefits, in later years  
Derived from academic institutes  
And rules, that they held something up to view  
Of a Republic, where all stood thus far  
Upon equal ground; that we were brothers all  
In honour, as in one community,  
Scholars and gentlemen; where, furthermore,  
Distinction open lay to all that came,  
And wealth and titles were in less esteem

Than talents, worth, and prosperous industry.

Add unto this, subservience from the first  
To presences of God's mysterious power  
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty,  
And fellowship with venerable books,  
To sanction the proud workings of the soul,  
And mountain liberty. It could not be  
But that one tutored thus should look with awe

Upon the faculties of man, receive  
Gladly the highest promises, and hail,  
As best, the government of equal rights  
And individual worth. And hence, O Friend!

If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced  
Less than might well befit my youth, the cause

In part lay here, that unto me the events  
Seemed nothing out of nature's certain course,

A gift that was come rather late than soon.  
No wonder, then, if advocates like these,  
Inflamed by passion, blind with prejudice,

And stung with injury, at this riper day,  
Were impotent to make my hopes put on  
The shape of theirs, my understanding bend

In honour to their honour: zeal, which yet  
Had slumbered, now in opposition burst  
Forth like a Polar summer: every word  
They uttered was a dart, by counter-winds  
Blown back upon themselves; their reason seemed

Confusion-stricken by a higher power  
Than human understanding, their discourse

Maimed, spiritless; and, in their weakness strong,

I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the roads  
Were crowded with the bravest youth of France,

And all the promptest of her spirits, linked  
In gallant soldiership, and posting on  
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.  
Yet at this very moment do tears start  
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep —  
I wept not then, — but tears have dimmed my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time,  
Domestic severings, female fortitude  
At dearest separation, patriot love  
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,

Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;  
Even files of strangers merely seen but  
once,

And for a moment, men from far with  
sound

Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,  
Entering the city, here and there a face,  
Or person, singled out among the rest, <sup>279</sup>  
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such;  
Even by these passing spectacles my heart  
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed  
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the  
cause

Good, pure, which no one could stand up  
against,

Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,  
Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,  
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,  
Already hinted at, of other mould —  
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest, <sup>290</sup>  
And with an oriental loathing spurned,  
As of a different caste. A meeker man  
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,  
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries  
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature  
then

Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,  
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,  
When foot hath crushed them. He through  
the events

Of that great change wandered in perfect  
faith, <sup>299</sup>

As through a book, an old romance, or tale  
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought  
Behind the summer clouds. By birth he  
ranked

With the most noble, but unto the poor  
Among mankind he was in service bound,  
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed  
To a religious order. Man he loved  
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,  
And all the homely in their homely works,  
Transferred a courtesy which had no air  
Of condescension; but did rather seem <sup>310</sup>  
A passion and a gallantry, like that  
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day  
Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,  
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,  
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy  
Diffused around him, while he was intent  
On works of love or freedom, or revolved  
Complacently the progress of a cause,  
Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek

And placid, and took nothing from the man  
That was delightful. Oft in solitude <sup>321</sup>  
With him did I discourse about the end  
Of civil government, and its wisest forms;  
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,  
Custom and habit, novelty and change;  
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few  
For patrimonial honour set apart,  
And ignorance in the labouring multitude.  
For he, to all intolerance indisposed, <sup>329</sup>  
Balanced these contemplations in his mind;  
And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped  
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment  
Than later days allowed; carried about me,  
With less alloy to its integrity,  
The experience of past ages, as, through  
help

Of books and common life, it makes sure  
way

To youthful minds, by objects over near  
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled  
By struggling with the crowd for present  
ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find  
Error without excuse upon the side <sup>341</sup>  
Of them who strove against us, more de-  
light

We took, and let this freely be confessed,  
In painting to ourselves the miseries  
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life  
Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul  
The meanest thrives the most; where  
dignity,

True personal dignity, abideth not;  
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off  
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,  
From lowly sympathy and chastening  
truth; <sup>351</sup>

Where good and evil interchange their  
names,

And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired  
With vice at home. We added dearest  
themes —

Man and his noble nature, as it is  
The gift which God has placed within his  
power,

His blind desires and steady faculties  
Capable of clear truth, the one to break  
Bondage, the other to build liberty  
On firm foundations, making social life, <sup>360</sup>  
Through knowledge spreading and imper-  
ishable,

As just in regulation, and as pure  
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honourable deeds  
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright  
spot,  
That would be found in all recorded time,  
Of truth preserved and error passed away;  
Of single spirits that catch the flame from  
Heaven,  
And how the multitudes of men will feed  
And fan each other; thought of sects, how  
keen

They are to put the appropriate nature on, <sup>370</sup>  
Triumphant over every obstacle  
Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,  
And what they do and suffer for their creed;  
How far they travel, and how long endure;  
How quickly mighty Nations have been  
formed,

From least beginnings; how, together locked  
By new opinions, scattered tribes have made  
One body, spreading wide as clouds in  
heaven.

To aspirations then of our own minds <sup>380</sup>  
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld  
A living confirmation of the whole  
Before us, in a people from the depth  
Of shameful imbecility uprisen,  
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked  
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,  
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,  
And continence of mind, and sense of right,  
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves, <sup>390</sup>  
Or such retirement, Friend! as we have  
known

In the green dales beside our Rotha's  
stream,

Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,  
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,  
On rational liberty, and hope in man,  
Justice and peace. But far more sweet  
such toil —

Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts ab-  
struse —

If nature then be standing on the brink  
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice  
Of one devoted, — one whom circumstance  
Hath called upon to embody his deep  
sense <sup>401</sup>

In action, give it outwardly a shape,  
And that of benediction, to the world.  
Then doubt is not, and truth is more than  
truth, —

A hope it is, and a desire; a creed  
Of zeal, by an authority Divine

Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.  
Such conversation, under Attic shades,  
Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus  
For a Deliverer's glorious task, — and such  
He, on that ministry already bound, <sup>411</sup>  
Held with Eudemus and Timonides,  
Surrounded by adventurers in arms,  
When those two vessels with their daring  
freight,

For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow,  
Sailed from Zacynthus, — philosophic war,  
Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,  
Though like ambition, such was he, O  
Friend!

Of whom I speak. So Beaupuis (let the  
name

Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity) <sup>420</sup>  
Fashioned his life; and many a long dis-  
course,

With like persuasion honoured, we main-  
tained:

He, on his part, accoutred for the worst,  
He perished fighting, in supreme command,  
Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire,  
For liberty, against deluded men,  
His fellow-countrymen; and yet most  
blessed

In this, that he the fate of later times  
Lived not to see, nor what we now behold,  
Who have as ardent hearts as he had  
then. <sup>430</sup>

Along that very Loire, with festal mirth  
Resounding at all hours, and innocent yet  
Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;  
Or in wide forests of continuous shade,  
Lofty and over-arched, with open space  
Beneath the trees, clear footing many a  
mile —

A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,  
From earnest dialogues I slipped in thought,  
And let remembrance steal to other times,  
When, o'er those interwoven roots, moss-  
clad, <sup>440</sup>

And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,  
Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed,  
might pace

In sylvan meditation undisturbed;  
As on the pavement of a Gothic church  
Walks a lone Monk, when service hath ex-  
pired,

In peace and silence. But if e'er was  
heard, —

Heard, though unseen, — a devious travel-  
ler,

Retiring or approaching from afar  
With speed and echoes loud of trampling  
hoofs

From the hard floor reverberated, then 450  
It was Angelica thundering through the  
woods

Upon her palfrey, or that gentle maid  
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.  
Sometimes methought I saw a pair of  
knights

Joust underneath the trees, that as in storm  
Rocked high above their heads; anon, the  
din

Of boisterous merriment, and music's roar,  
In sudden proclamation, burst from haunt  
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with  
dance

Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst, 460  
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.  
The width of those huge forests, unto me  
A novel scene, did often in this way  
Master my fancy while I wandered on  
With that revered companion. And some-  
times —

When to a convent in a meadow green,  
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,  
And not by reverential touch of Time  
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt —  
In spite of those heart-bracing collo-  
quies, 470

In spite of real fervour, and of that  
Less genuine and wrought up within my-  
self —

I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,  
And for the *Matin*-bell to sound no more  
Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the  
cross

High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign  
(How welcome to the weary traveller's  
eyes!)

Of hospitality and peaceful rest.  
And when the partner of those varied walks  
Pointed upon occasion to the site 480  
Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,  
To the imperial edifice of Blois,  
Or to that rural castle, name now slipped  
From my remembrance, where a lady  
lodged,

By the first Francis wooed, and bound to  
him

In chains of mutual passion, from the  
tower,

As a tradition of the country tells,  
Practised to commune with her royal  
knight

By cressets and love-beacons, intercourse  
"Twixt her high-seated residence and  
his 490

Far off at Chambord on the plain beneath;  
Even here, though less than with the peace-  
ful house

Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments  
Of Kings, their vices and their better deeds,  
Imagination, potent to inflame  
At times with virtuous wrath and noble  
scorn,

Did also often mitigate the force  
Of civic prejudice, the bigotry,  
So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;  
And on these spots with many gleams I  
looked 500

Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,  
Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one  
Is law for all, and of that barren pride  
In them who, by immunities unjust,  
Between the sovereign and the people  
stand,

His helper and not theirs, laid stronger hold  
Daily upon me, mixed with pity too  
And love; for where hope is, there love  
will be

For the abject multitude. And when we  
chanced

One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl, 510  
Who crept along fitting her languid gait  
Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord  
Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the  
lane

Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid  
hands

Was busy knitting in a heartless mood  
Of solitude, and at the sight my friend  
In agitation said, "T is against *that*  
That we are fighting," I with him believed  
That a benignant spirit was abroad  
Which might not be withstood, that  
poverty 520

Abject as this would in a little time  
Be found no more, that we should see the  
earth

Unthwarted in her wish to recompense  
The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,  
All institutes for ever blotted out  
That legalised exclusion, empty pomp  
Abolished, sensual state and cruel power  
Whether by edict of the one or few;

And finally, as sun and crown of all, 529  
Should see the people having a strong hand  
In framing their own laws; whence better  
days

To all mankind. But, these things set  
 apart,  
 Was not this single confidence enough  
 To animate the mind that ever turned  
 A thought to human welfare? That  
 henceforth  
 Captivity by mandate without law  
 Should cease; and open accusation lead  
 To sentence in the hearing of the world,  
 And open punishment, if not the air  
 Be free to breathe in, and the heart of  
 man  
 Dread nothing. From this height I shall<sup>540</sup>  
 not stoop  
 To humbler matter that detained us oft  
 In thought or conversation, public acts,  
 And public persons, and emotions wrought  
 Within the breast, as ever-varying winds  
 Of record or report swept over us;  
 But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,  
 Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,  
 That prove to what low depth had struck  
 the roots,  
 How widely spread the boughs, of that old  
 tree  
 Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul<sup>550</sup>  
 And black dishonour, France was weary of.

Oh, happy time of youthful lovers, (thus  
 The story might begin,) oh, balmy time,  
 In which a love-knot, on a lady's brow,  
 Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven!  
 So might—and with that prelude *dil*  
 begin  
 The record; and, in faithful verse, was  
 given  
 The doleful sequel.

But our little bark  
 On a strong river boldly hath been  
 launched;  
 And from the driving current should we<sup>560</sup>  
 turn  
 To loiter wilfully within a creek,  
 Howe'er attractive, Fellow voyager!  
 Would'st thou not chide? Yet deem not  
 my pains lost:  
 For Vaudracour and Julia (so were named  
 The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will  
 draw  
 Tears from the hearts of others, when their  
 own  
 Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there  
 may'st read,  
 At leisure, how the enamoured youth was  
 driven,

By public power abased, to fatal crime,<sup>570</sup>  
 Nature's rebellion against monstrous law;  
 How, between heart and heart, oppression  
 thrust  
 Her mandates, severing whom true love  
 had joined,  
 Harassing both; until he sank and pressed  
 The couch his fate had made for him;  
 supine,  
 Save when the stings of viperous remorse,  
 Trying their strength, enforced him to  
 start up,  
 Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep wood  
 He fled, to shun the haunts of human kind;  
 There dwelt, weakened in spirit more and  
 more;  
 Nor could the voice of Freedom, which<sup>580</sup>  
 through France  
 Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
 Or personal memory of his own worst  
 wrongs,  
 Rouse him; but, hidden in those gloomy  
 shades,  
 His days he wasted,—an imbecile mind.

## BOOK TENTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE (*continued*)

It was a beautiful and silent day  
 That overspread the countenance of earth,  
 Then fading with unusual quietness,—  
 A day as beautiful as e'er was given  
 To soothe regret, though deepening what it  
 soothed,  
 When by the gliding Loire I paused, and  
 cast  
 Upon his rich domains, vineyard and tilth,  
 Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured  
 woods,  
 Again, and yet again, a farewell look;  
 Then from the quiet of that scene passed  
 on,  
 Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From his<sup>10</sup>  
 throne  
 The King had fallen, and that invading  
 host—  
 Presumptuous cloud, on whose black front  
 was written  
 The tender mercies of the dismal wind  
 That bore it—on the plains of Liberty  
 Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder words,  
 They—who had come elate as eastern  
 hunters  
 Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when he

Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,  
 Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent <sup>20</sup>  
 To drive their prey enclosed within a ring  
 Wide as a province, but, the signal given,  
 Before the point of the life-threatening  
 spear  
 Narrowing itself by moments — they, rash  
 men,  
 Had seen the anticipated quarry turned  
 Into avengers, from whose wrath they fled  
 In terror. Disappointment and dismay  
 Remained for all whose fancies had run  
 wild  
 With evil expectations; confidence <sup>29</sup>  
 And perfect triumph for the better cause.

The State — as if to stamp the final seal  
 On her security, and to the world  
 Show what she was, a high and fearless  
 soul,  
 Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung  
 By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt  
 With spiteful gratitude the baffled League,  
 That had stirred up her slackening faculties  
 To a new transition — when the King was  
 crushed,  
 Spared not the empty throne, and in proud  
 haste  
 Assumed the body and venerable name <sup>40</sup>  
 Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes,  
 'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire  
 work  
 Of massacre, in which the senseless sword  
 Was prayed to as a judge; but these were  
 past,  
 Earth free from them for ever, as was  
 thought, —  
 Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once!  
 Things that could only show themselves  
 and die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I re-  
 turned,  
 And ranged, with ardour heretofore unfelt,  
 The spacious city, and in progress passed  
 The prison where the unhappy Monarch  
 lay, <sup>51</sup>  
 Associate with his children and his wife  
 In bondage; and the palace, lately stormed  
 With roar of cannon by a furious host.  
 I crossed the square (an empty area then!)  
 Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain  
 The dead, upon the dying heaped, and gazed  
 On this and other spots, as doth a man  
 Upon a volume whose contents he knows

Are memorable, but from him locked up, <sup>60</sup>  
 Being written in a tongue he cannot read,  
 So that he questions the mute leaves with  
 pain,  
 And half upbraids their silence. But that  
 night  
 I felt most deeply in what world I was,  
 What ground I trod on, and what air I  
 breathed.  
 High was my room and lonely, near the  
 roof  
 Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge  
 That would have pleased me in more quiet  
 times;  
 Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.  
 With unextinguished taper I kept watch, <sup>70</sup>  
 Reading at intervals; the fear gone by  
 Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.  
 I thought of those September massacres,  
 Divided from me by one little month,  
 Saw them and touched: the rest was con-  
 jured up  
 From tragic fictions or true history,  
 Remembrances and dim admonishments.  
 The horse is taught his manage, and no  
 star  
 Of wildest course but treads back his own  
 steps;  
 For the spent hurricane the air provides <sup>80</sup>  
 As fierce a successor; the tide retreats  
 But to return out of its hiding-place  
 In the great deep; all things have second  
 birth;  
 The earthquake is not satisfied at once;  
 And in this way I wrought upon myself,  
 Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,  
 To the whole city, "Sleep no more." The  
 trance  
 Fled with the voice to which it had given  
 birth;  
 But vainly comments of a calmer mind  
 Promised soft peace and sweet forgetful-  
 ness. <sup>90</sup>  
 The place, all hushed and silent as it was,  
 Appeared unfit for the repose of night,  
 Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.  
 With early morning towards the Palace-  
 walk  
 Of Orleans eagerly I turned: as yet  
 The streets were still; not so those long  
 Arcades;  
 There, 'mid a peal of ill-matched sounds  
 and cries,  
 That greeted me on entering, I could hear



Shrill voices from the hawkers in the throng,  
 Bawling, "Denunciation of the Crimes 100  
 Of Maximilian Robespierre;" the hand,  
 Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed  
 speech,  
 The same that had been recently pronounced,  
 When Robespierre, not ignorant for what mark

Some words of indirect reproof had been  
 Intended, rose in hardihood, and dared  
 The man who had an ill surmise of him  
 To bring his charge in openness; whereat,  
 When a dead pause ensued, and no one  
 stirred,

In silence of all present, from his seat 110  
 Louvet walked single through the avenue,  
 And took his station in the Tribune, saying,  
 "I, Robespierre, accuse thee!" Well is  
 known

The inglorious issue of that charge, and how  
 He, who had launched the startling thunder-  
 bolt,

The one bold man, whose voice the attack  
 had sounded,

Was left without a follower to discharge  
 His perilous duty, and retire lamenting  
 That Heaven's best aid is wasted upon men  
 Who to themselves are false.

But these are things  
 Of which I speak, only as they were storm  
 Or sunshine to my individual mind, 122  
 No further. Let me then relate that now —  
 In some sort seeing with my proper eyes  
 That Liberty, and Life, and Death, would  
 soon

To the remotest corners of the land  
 Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled  
 The capital City; what was struggled for,  
 And by what combatants victory must be  
 won;

The indecision on their part whose aim 130  
 Seemed best, and the straightforward path  
 of those

Who in attack or in defence were strong  
 Through their impiety — my inmost soul  
 Was agitated; yea, I could almost  
 Have prayed that throughout earth upon  
 all men,

By patient exercise of reason made  
 Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled  
 With zeal expanding in Truth's holy light,  
 The gift of tongues might fall, and power  
 arrive

From the four quarters of the winds to do  
 For France, what without help she could  
 not do, 141

A work of honour; think not that this  
 I added, work of safety: from all doubt  
 Or trepidation for the end of things  
 Far was I, far as angels are from guilt.

Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved, but  
 thought

Of opposition and of remedies:  
 An insignificant stranger and obscure,  
 And one, moreover, little graced with power  
 Of eloquence even in my native speech, 150  
 And all unfit for tumult or intrigue,  
 Yet would I at this time with willing heart  
 Have undertaken for a cause so great  
 Service however dangerous. I revolved,  
 How much the destiny of Man had still  
 Hung upon single persons; that there was,  
 Transcendent to all local patrimony,  
 One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;  
 That objects, even as they are great, thereby  
 Do come within the reach of humblest  
 eyes; 160

That Man is only weak through his mis-  
 trust

And want of hope where evidence divine  
 Proclaims to him that hope should be most  
 sure;

Nor did the inexperience of my youth  
 Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong  
 In hope, and trained to noble aspirations,  
 A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,  
 Is for Society's unreasoning herd  
 A domineering instinct, serves at once  
 For way and guide, a fluent receptacle 170  
 That gathers up each petty straggling rill  
 And vein of water, glad to be rolled on  
 In safe obedience; that a mind, whose rest  
 Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,  
 In circumspection and simplicity,  
 Falls rarely in entire discomfiture  
 Below its aim, or meets with, from without,  
 A treachery that foils it or defeats;

And, lastly, if the means on human will,  
 Frail human will, dependent should betray  
 Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt 181  
 That 'mid the loud distractions of the world  
 A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,  
 Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong,  
 Of life and death, in majesty severe  
 Enjoining, as may best promote the aims  
 Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,  
 From whatsoever region of our cares

Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,  
Earnest and blind, against the stern decree.

On the other side, I called to mind those truths<sup>191</sup>  
That are the commonplaces of the schools —  
(A theme for boys, too hackneyed for their sires,)

Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,  
In all their comprehensive bearings known  
And visible to philosophers of old,  
Men who, to business of the world un-  
trained,  
Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius known

And his compeer Aristogiton, known<sup>199</sup>  
To Brutus — that tyrannic power is weak,  
Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor love,  
Nor the support of good or evil men  
To trust in; that the godhead which is ours  
Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;  
That nothing hath a natural right to last  
But equity and reason; that all else  
Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best  
Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my thoughts  
Strong and perturbed, not doubting at that time<sup>210</sup>

But that the virtue of one paramount mind  
Would have abashed those impious crests  
— have quelled

Outrage and bloody power, and — in despite  
Of what the People long had been and were  
Through ignorance and false teaching, sad-  
der proof

Of immaturity, and — in the teeth  
Of desperate opposition from without —  
Have cleared a passage for just govern-  
ment,

And left a solid birthright to the State,  
Redeemed, according to example given<sup>220</sup>  
By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind,  
Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,  
So seemed it, — now I thankfully acknow-  
ledge,

Forced by the gracious providence of  
Heaven, —

To England I returned, else (though as-  
sured

That I both was and must be of small  
weight,

No better than a landsman on the deck

Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)  
Doubtless, I should have then made com-  
mon cause

With some who perished; haply perished  
too,<sup>230</sup>

A poor mistaken and bewildered offering, —  
Should to the breast of Nature have gone  
back,

With all my resolutions, all my hopes,  
A Poet only to myself, to men  
Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a soul  
To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall  
Their leaves, as often Winter had put on  
His hoary crown, since I had seen the surge  
Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of  
mine<sup>239</sup>

Had caught the accents of my native speech  
Upon our native country's sacred ground.  
A patriot of the world, how could I glide  
Into communion with her sylvan shades,  
Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased  
me more

To abide in the great City, where I found  
The general air still busy with the stir  
Of that first memorable onset made  
By a strong levy of humanity  
Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;  
Effort which, though defeated, had recalled  
To notice old forgotten principles,<sup>251</sup>  
And through the nation spread a novel heat  
Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own  
That this particular strife had wanted power  
To rivet my affections; nor did now  
Its unsuccessful issue much excite  
My sorrow; for I brought with me the  
faith

That, if France prospered, good men would  
not long

Pay fruitless worship to humanity,  
And this most rotten branch of human  
shame,<sup>260</sup>

Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains,  
Would fall together with its parent tree.  
What, then, were my emotions, when in  
arms

Britain put forth her free-born strength in  
league,

Oh, pity and shame! with those confeder-  
ate Powers!

Not in my single self alone I found,  
But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,  
Change and subversion from that hour. No  
shock

Given to my moral nature had I known<sup>269</sup>

Down to that very moment; neither lapse  
Nor turn of sentiment that might be named  
A revolution, save at this one time;  
All else was progress on the self-same path  
On which, with a diversity of pace,  
I had been travelling: this a stride at once  
Into another region. As a light  
And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze  
On some grey rock — its birth-place — so  
had I

Wanted, fast rooted on the ancient tower  
Of my beloved country, wishing not <sup>280</sup>  
A happier fortune than to wither there:  
Now was I from that pleasant station torn  
And tossed about in whirlwind. I rejoiced,  
Yea, afterwards — truth most painful to  
record! —

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul,  
When Englishmen by thousands were o'er-  
thrown,  
Left without glory on the field, or driven,  
Brave hearts! to shameful flight. It was  
a grief, —

Grief call it not, 't was anything but that, —  
A conflict of sensations without name, <sup>290</sup>  
Of which *he* only, who may love the sight  
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,  
When, in the congregation bending all  
To their great 'Father, prayers were offered  
up,

Or praises for our country's victories;  
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance  
I only, like an uninvited guest  
Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall I  
add,  
Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh! much have they to account for, who  
could tear, <sup>300</sup>  
By violence, at one decisive rent,  
From the best youth in England their dear  
pride,

Their joy, in England; this, too, at a time  
In which worst losses easily might wean  
The best of names, when patriotic love  
Did of itself in modesty give way,  
Like the Precursor when the Deity  
Is come Whose harbinger he was; a time  
In which apostasy from ancient faith  
Seemed but conversion to a higher creed;  
Withal a season dangerous and wild, <sup>311</sup>  
A time when sage Experience would have  
snatched

Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose  
A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

When the proud fleet that bears the red-  
cross flag

In that unworthy service was prepared  
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,  
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;  
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner  
Through a whole month of calm and glassy  
days <sup>320</sup>

In that delightful island which protects  
Their place of convocation — there I heard,  
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,  
A monitory sound that never failed, —  
The sunset cannon. While the orb went  
down

In the tranquillity of nature, came  
That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by  
me

Without a spirit overcast by dark  
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,  
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

In France, the men, who, for their des-  
perate ends, <sup>331</sup>  
Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were  
glad

Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong before  
In wicked pleas, were strong as demons  
now;

And thus, on every side beset with foes,  
The goaded land waxed mad; the crimes  
of few

Spread into madness of the many; blasts  
From hell came sanctified like airs from  
heaven.

The sternness of the just, the faith of those  
Who doubted not that Providence had  
times <sup>340</sup>

Of vengeful retribution, theirs who throned  
The human Understanding paramount  
And made of that their God, the hopes of  
men

Who were content to barter short-lived  
pangs

For a paradise of ages, the blind rage  
Of insolent tempers, the light vanity  
Of intermeddlers, steady purposes  
Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,  
And all the accidents of life — were pressed  
Into one service, busy with one work. <sup>350</sup>  
The Senate stood aghast, her prudence  
quenched,

Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scared,  
Her frenzy only active to extol  
Past outrages, and shape the way for new,  
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigate.

Domestic carnage now filled the whole  
year  
With feast-days; old men from the chimney-  
nook,  
The maiden from the bosom of her love,  
The mother from the cradle of her babe,  
The warrior from the field — all perished,  
all — 360

Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages, ranks,  
Head after head, and never heads enough  
For those that bade them fall. They found  
their joy,

They made it proudly, eager as a child,  
(If like desires of innocent little ones  
May with such heinous appetites be com-  
pared),

Pleased in some open field to exercise  
A toy that mimics with revolving wings  
The motion of a wind-mill; though the air  
Do of itself blow fresh, and make the vanes  
Spin in his eyesight, *that* contents him not,  
But with the plaything at arm's length, he  
sets 372

His front against the blast, and runs amain,  
That it may whirl the faster.

Amid the depth  
Of those enormities, even thinking minds  
Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their  
being,

Forgot that such a sound was ever heard  
As Liberty upon earth: yet all beneath  
Her innocent authority was wrought,  
Nor could have been, without her blessed  
name. 380

The illustrious wife of Roland, in the hour  
Of her composure, felt that agony,  
And gave it vent in her last words. O  
Friend!

It was a lamentable time for man,  
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not:  
A woful time for them whose hopes survived  
The shock; most woful for those few who  
still

Were flattered, and had trust in human  
kind:

They had the deepest feeling of the grief.  
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they de-  
served: 390

The Herculean Commonwealth had put  
forth her arms,  
And throttled with an infant godhead's  
might

The snakes about her cradle; that was  
well,

And as it should be; yet no cure for them

Whose souls were sick with pain of what  
would be  
Hereafter brought in charge against man-  
kind.

Most melancholy at that time, 'O Friend!  
Were my day-thoughts, — my nights were  
miserable;

Through months, through years, long after  
the last beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep 400  
To me came rarely charged with natural  
gifts,

Such ghastly visions had I of despair  
And tyranny, and implements of death;  
And innocent victims sinking under fear,  
And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,  
Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds  
For sacrifice, and struggling with fond mirth  
And levity in dungeons, where the dust  
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the  
scene

Changed, and the unbroken dream entangled  
me 410

In long orations, which I strove to plead  
Before unjust tribunals, — with a voice  
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a  
sense,

Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt  
In the last place of refuge — my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful prime  
To yield myself to Nature, when that strong  
And holy passion overcame me first,  
Nor day nor night, evening or morn, was  
free

From its oppression. But, O Power Su-  
preme! 420

Without Whose call this world would cease  
to breathe,

Who from the fountain of Thy grace dost  
fill

The veins that branch through every frame  
of life,

Making man what he is, creature divine,  
In single or in social eminence,

Above the rest raised infinite ascents

When reason that enables him to be

Is not sequestered — what a change is here!

How different ritual for this after-worship,  
What countenance to promote this second  
love! 430

The first was service paid to things which  
lie

Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.

Therefore to serve was high beatitude;

Tumult was therefore gladness, and the fear  
 Ennobling, venerable; sleep secure,  
 And waking thoughts more rich than hap-  
 piest dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne aloft  
 In vision, yet constrained by natural laws  
 With them to take a troubled human heart,  
 Wanted not consolations, nor a creed <sup>440</sup>  
 Of reconciliation, then when they de-  
 nounced,

On towns and cities, wallowing in the abyss  
 Of their offences, punishment to come;  
 Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,  
 Before them, in some desolated place,  
 The wrath consummate and the threat  
 fulfilled;

So, with devout humility be it said,  
 So did a portion of that spirit fall  
 On me uplifted from the vantage-ground  
 Of pity and sorrow to a state of being <sup>450</sup>  
 That through the time's exceeding fierceness  
 saw

Glimpses of retribution, terrible,  
 And in the order of sublime behests:  
 But, even if that were not, amid the awe  
 Of unintelligible chastisement,  
 Not only acquiescences of faith  
 Survived, but daring sympathies with power,  
 Motions not treacherous or profane, else  
 why

Within the folds of no ungentle breast  
 Their dread vibration to this hour prolonged?  
 Wild blasts of music thus could find their  
 way <sup>461</sup>

Into the midst of turbulent events;  
 So that worst tempests might be listened to.  
 Then was the truth received into my heart,  
 That, under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,  
 If from the affliction somewhere do not  
 grow

Honour which could not else have been, a  
 faith,

An elevation, and a sanctity,  
 If new strength be not given nor old restored,  
 The blame is ours, not Nature's. When a  
 taunt <sup>470</sup>

Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,  
 Saying, "Behold the harvest that we reap  
 From popular government and equality,"  
 I clearly saw that neither these nor aught  
 Of wild belief engrafted on their names  
 By false philosophy had caused the woe,  
 But a terrific reservoir of guilt  
 And ignorance filled up from age to age,

That could no longer hold its loathsome  
 charge,  
 But burst and spread in deluge through the  
 land. <sup>480</sup>

And as the desert hath green spots, the  
 sea  
 Small islands scattered amid stormy waves,  
 So *that* disastrous period did not want  
 Bright sprinklings of all human excellence,  
 To which the silver wands of saints in  
 Heaven

Might point with rapturous joy. Yet not  
 the less,

For those examples, in no age surpassed,  
 Of fortitude and energy and love,  
 And human nature faithful to herself  
 Under worst trials, was I driven to think <sup>490</sup>  
 Of the glad times when first I traversed  
 France

A youthful pilgrim; above all reviewed  
 That eventide, when under windows bright  
 With happy faces and with garlands hung,  
 And through a rainbow-arch that spanned  
 the street,

Triumphal pomp for liberty confirmed,  
 I paced, a dear companion at my side,  
 The town of Arras, whence with promise  
 high

Issued, on delegation to sustain  
 Humanity and right, *that* Robespierre, <sup>500</sup>  
 He who thereafter, and in how short time!  
 Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.  
 When the calamity spread far and wide —  
 And this same city, that did then appear  
 To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned  
 Under the vengeance of her cruel son,  
 As Lear reproached the winds — I could  
 almost

Have quarrelled with that blameless spec-  
 tacle

For lingering yet an image in my mind  
 To mock me under such a strange reverse.

O Friend! few happier moments have  
 been mine <sup>511</sup>  
 Than that which told the downfall of this  
 Tribe

So dreaded, so abhorred. The day deserves  
 A separate record. Over the smooth sands  
 Of Leven's ample estuary lay  
 My journey, and beneath a genial sun,  
 With distant prospect among gleams of sky  
 And clouds and intermingling mountain  
 tops,

In one inseparable glory clad,  
Creatures of one ethereal substance met 520  
In consistory, like a diadem  
Or crown of burning seraphs as they sit  
In the empyrean. Underneath that pomp  
Celestial, lay unseen the pastoral vales  
Among whose happy fields I had grown up  
From childhood. On the fulgent spectacle,  
That neither passed away nor changed, I  
gazed

Enrapt; but brightest things are wont to  
draw

Sad opposites out of the inner heart,  
As even their pensive influence drew from  
mine. 530

How could it otherwise? for not in vain  
That very morning had I turned aside  
To seek the ground where, 'mid a throng  
of graves,

An honoured teacher of my youth was laid,  
And on the stone were graven by his desire  
Lines from the churchyard elegy of Gray.  
This faithful guide, speaking from his  
death-bed,

Added no farewell to his parting counsel,  
But said to me, "My head will soon lie  
low;"

And when I saw the turf that covered  
him, 540

After the lapse of full eight years, those  
words,

With sound of voice and countenance of  
the Man,

Came back upon me, so that some few tears  
Fell from me in my own despite. But now  
I thought, still traversing that widespread  
plain,

With tender pleasure of the verses graven  
Upon his tombstone, whispering to myself:  
He loved the Poets, and, if now alive,  
Would have loved me, as one not destitute  
Of promise, nor belying the kind hope 550  
That he had formed, when I, at his com-  
mand,

Began to spin, with toil, my earliest songs.

As I advanced, all that I saw or felt  
Was gentleness and peace. Upon a small  
And rocky island near, a fragment stood,  
(Itself like a sea rock) the low remains  
(With shells encrusted, dark with briny  
weeds)

Of a dilapidated structure, once  
A Romish chapel, where the vested priest  
Said matins at the hour that suited those

Who crossed the sands with ebb of morning  
tide. 561

Not far from that still ruin all the plain  
Lay spotted with a variegated crowd  
Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,  
Wading beneath the conduct of their guide  
In loose procession through the shallow  
stream

Of inland waters; the great sea meanwhile  
Heaved at safe distance, far retired. I  
paused,

Longing for skill to paint a scene so bright  
And cheerful, but the foremost of the band  
As he approached, no salutation given 571  
In the familiar language of the day,  
Cried, "Robespierre is dead!" nor was a  
doubt,

After strict question, left within my mind  
That he and his supporters all were fallen.

Great was my transport, deep my grati-  
tude

To everlasting Justice, by this fiat  
Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden  
times,"

Said I forth-pouring on those open sands  
A hymn of triumph: "as the morning  
comes 580

From out the bosom of the night, come ye:  
Thus far our trust is verified; behold!  
They who with clumsy desperation brought  
A river of Blood, and preached that nothing  
else

Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the  
might

Of their own helper have been swept away;  
Their madness stands declared and visible;  
Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and  
earth

March firmly towards righteousness and  
peace." —

Then schemes I framed more calmly, when  
and how 590

The madding factions might be tranquil-  
lised,

And how through hardships manifold and  
long

The glorious renovation would proceed.

Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts  
Of exultation, I pursued my way  
Along that very shore which I had skimmed  
In former days, when — spurring from the  
Vale

Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's mouldering  
fane,

And the stone abbot, after circuit made  
 In wantonness of heart, a joyous band 600  
 Of schoolboys hastening to their distant  
   home \*  
 Along the margin of the moonlight sea —  
 We beat with thundering hoofs the level  
   sand.

## BOOK ELEVENTH

FRANCE (*concluded*)

FROM that time forth, Authority in France  
 Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,  
 Yet everything was wanting that might give  
 Courage to them who looked for good by  
   light

Of rational Experience, for the shoots  
 And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:  
 Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;  
 The Senate's language, and the public acts  
 And measures of the Government, though  
   both

Weak, and of heartless omen, had not  
   power 10

To daunt me; in the People was my trust:  
 And, in the virtues which mine eyes had  
   seen,

I knew that wound external could not take  
 Life from the young Republic; that new  
   foes

Would only follow, in the path of shame,  
 Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the  
   end

Great, universal, irresistible.

This intuition led me to confound

One victory with another, higher far, —

Triumphs of unambitious peace at home, 20

And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still  
 Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought  
 That what was in degree the same was  
   likewise

The same in quality, — that, as the worse  
 Of the two spirits then at strife remained  
 Untired, the better, surely, would preserve  
 The heart that first had roused him. Youth  
   maintains,

In all conditions of society,

Communion more direct and intimate

With Nature, — hence, oftentimes, with rea-  
   son too — 30

Than age or manhood, even. To Nature  
   then,

Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,  
 Had left an interregnum's open space

For her to move about in, uncontrolled.

Hence could I see how Babel-like their  
   task,

Who, by the recent deluge stupified,  
 With their whole souls went culling from  
   the day

Its petty promises, to build a tower  
 For their own safety; laughed with my  
   compeers

At gravest heads, by enmity to France 40  
 Distempered, till they found, in every blast  
 Forced from the street-disturbing news-  
   man's horn,

For her great cause record or prophecy  
 Of utter ruin. How might we believe  
 That wisdom could, in any shape, come  
   near

Men clinging to delusions so insane ?

And thus, experience proving that no few  
 Of our opinions had been just, we took  
 Like credit to ourselves where less was due,  
 And thought that other notions were as  
   sound, 50

Yea, could not but be right, because we saw  
 That foolish men opposed them.

To a strain  
 More animated I might here give way,  
 And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,  
 What in those days, through Britain, was  
   performed

To turn *all* judgments out of their right  
   course;

But this is passion over-near ourselves,  
 Reality too close and too intense,  
 And intermixed with something, in my mind,  
 Of scorn and condemnation personal, 60  
 That would profane the sanctity of verse.

Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time  
 Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men  
 Thirsting to make the guardian crook of  
   law

A tool of murder; they who ruled the  
   State —

Though with such awful proof before their  
   eyes

That he, who would sow death, reaps death,  
   or worse,

And can reap nothing better — child-like  
   longed

To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;  
 Or left (by mere timidity betrayed) 70  
 The plain straight road, for one no better  
   chosen

Than if their wish had been to undermine  
 Justice, and make an end of Liberty.

But from these bitter truths I must return  
To my own history. It hath been told  
That I was led to take an eager part  
In arguments of civil polity,  
Abruptly, and indeed before my time:  
I had approached, like other youths, the  
shield

Of human nature from the golden side, so  
And would have fought, even to the death,  
to attest

The quality of the metal which I saw.  
What there is best in individual man,  
Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,  
Benevolent in small societies,  
And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,  
Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood  
By reason: nay, far from it; they were yet,  
As cause was given me afterwards to learn,  
Not proof against the injuries of the day;  
Lodged only at the sanctuary's door, 91  
Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,  
And with such general insight into evil,  
And of the bounds which sever it from good,  
As books and common intercourse with life  
Must needs have given — to the inexpe-  
rienced mind,

When the world travels in a beaten road,  
Guide faithful as is needed — I began  
To meditate with ardour on the rule  
And management of nations; what it is 100  
And ought to be; and strove to learn how  
far

Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,  
Their happiness or misery, depends  
Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
stood

Upon our side, us who were strong in love!  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very Heaven! O  
times, 109

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance!  
When Reason seemed the most to assert her  
rights,

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime enchantress — to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her name!  
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole  
Earth,

The beauty wore of promise — that which  
sets

(As at some moments might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of Paradise itself) 120  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.  
What temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!  
They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,

The play-fellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
strength

Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had  
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
As if they had within some lurking right 131  
To wield it; — they, too, who of gentle  
mood

Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves; —  
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and  
lofty

Did both find, helpers to their hearts' desire,  
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
wish, —

Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia, — subterranean fields, — 140  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
where!

But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us, — the place where, in the end,  
We find our happiness, or not at all!

Why should I not confess that Earth was  
then

To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,  
Seems, when the first time visited, to one  
Who thither comes to find in it his home?  
He walks about and looks upon the spot  
With cordial transport, moulds it and re-  
moulds, 150

And is half-pleased with things that are  
amiss,

'T will be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked  
From every object pleasant circumstance  
To suit my ends; I moved among mankind  
With genial feelings still predominant;  
When erring, erring on the better part,  
And in the kinder spirit; placable,  
Indulgent, as not uninformed that men 159



See as they have been taught — Antiquity  
Gives rights to error; and aware, no less  
That throwing off oppression must be work  
As well of License as of Liberty;  
And above all — for this was more than  
all —

Not caring if the wind did now and then  
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave  
Prospect so large into futurity;  
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,  
Diffusing only those affections wider  
That from the cradle had grown up with  
me, 170  
And losing, in no other way than light  
Is lost in light, the weak in the more strong.

In the main outline, such it might be  
said

Was my condition, till with open war  
Britain opposed the liberties of France.  
This threw me first out of the pale of love;  
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the  
source,

My sentiments; was not, as hitherto, 178  
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,  
But change of them into their contraries;  
And thus a way was opened for mistakes  
And false conclusions, in degree as gross,  
In kind more dangerous. What had been  
a pride,

Was now a shame; my likings and my loves  
Ran in new channels, leaving old ones dry;  
And hence a blow that, in maturer age,  
Would but have touched the judgment,  
struck more deep

Into sensations near the heart: meantime,  
As from the first, wild theories were afloat,  
To whose pretensions, sedulously urged, 190  
I had but lent a careless ear, assured  
That time was ready to set all things right,  
And that the multitude, so long oppressed,  
Would be oppressed no more.

But when events  
Brought less encouragement, and unto these  
The immediate proof of principles no more  
Could be entrusted, while the events them-  
selves,

Worn out in greatness, stripped of novelty,  
Less occupied the mind, and sentiments  
Could through my understanding's natural  
growth 200

No longer keep their ground, by faith main-  
tained

Of inward consciousness, and hope that laid  
Her hand upon her object — evidence

Safer, of universal application, such  
As could not be impeached, was sought else-  
where.

But now, become oppressors in their turn,  
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-  
defence

For one of conquest, losing sight of all  
Which they had struggled for: up mounted  
now,

Openly in the eye of earth and heaven, 210  
The scale of liberty. I read her doom.  
With anger vexed, with disappointment  
sore,

But not dismayed, nor taking to the shame  
Of a false prophet. While resentment rose,  
Striving to hide, what nought could heal,  
the wounds

Of mortified presumption, I adhered  
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove  
Their temper, strained them more; and  
thus, in heat

Of contest, did opinions every day  
Grow into consequence, till round my  
mind 220

They clung, as if they were its life, nay  
more,

The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things tend-  
ing fast

To depravation, speculative schemes —  
That promised to abstract the hopes of  
Man

Out of his feelings, to be fixed thenceforth  
For ever in a purer element —

Found ready welcome. Tempting region  
that

For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,  
Where passions had the privilege to work,  
And never hear the sound of their own  
names. 231

But, speaking more in charity, the dream  
Flattered the young, pleased with ex-  
tremes, nor least

With that which makes our Reason's naked  
self

The object of its fervour. What delight!  
How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-  
rule,

To look through all the frailties of the  
world,

And, with a resolute mastery shaking off  
Infirmities of nature, time, and place,  
Build social upon personal Liberty, 240

Which, to the blind restraints of general laws,  
 Superior, magisterially adopts  
 One guide, the light of circumstances, flashed  
 Upon an independent intellect.  
 Thus expectation rose again; thus hope,  
 From her first ground expelled, grew proud once more.  
 Oft, as my thoughts were turned to human kind,  
 I scorned indifference; but, inflamed with thirst  
 Of a secure intelligence, and sick <sup>249</sup>  
 Of other longing, I pursued what seemed  
 A more exalted nature; wished that Man  
 Should start out of his earthly, worm-like state,  
 And spread abroad the wings of Liberty,  
 Lord of himself, in undisturbed delight —  
 A noble aspiration! *yet* I feel  
 (Sustained by worthier as by wiser thoughts)  
 The aspiration, nor shall ever cease  
 To feel it;— but return we to our course.

Enough, 'tis true — could such a plea  
 excuse  
 Those aberrations — had the clamorous  
 friends <sup>260</sup>  
 Of ancient Institutions said and done  
 To bring disgrace upon their very names;  
 Disgrace, of which, custom and written law,  
 And sundry moral sentiments as props  
 Or emanations of those institutes,  
 Too justly bore a part. A veil had been  
 Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in  
 sooth,  
 'T was even so; and sorrow for the man  
 Who either had not eyes wherewith to  
 see,  
 Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong  
 shock <sup>270</sup>  
 Was given to old opinions; all men's minds  
 Had felt its power, and mine was both let  
 loose,  
 Let loose and goaded. After what hath  
 been  
 Already said of patriotic love,  
 Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat stern  
 In temperament, withal a happy man,  
 And therefore bold to look on painful  
 things,  
 Free likewise of the world, and thence  
 more bold,

I summoned my best skill, and toiled, in-  
 tent  
 To anatomise the frame of social life; <sup>280</sup>  
 Yea, the whole body of society  
 Searched to its heart. Share with me,  
 Friend! the wish  
 That some dramatic tale, endued with  
 shapes  
 Livelier, and flinging out less guarded  
 words  
 Than suit the work we fashion, might set  
 forth  
 What then I learned, or think I learned, of  
 truth,  
 And the errors into which I fell, betrayed  
 By present objects, and by reasonings false  
 From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn  
 Out of a heart that had been turned aside  
 From Nature's way by outward accidents,  
 And which was thus confounded, more and  
 more <sup>292</sup>  
 Misguided, and misleading. So I fared,  
 Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims,  
 creeds,  
 Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,  
 Suspiciously, to establish in plain day  
 Her titles and her honours; now believing,  
 Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed  
 With impulse, motive, right and wrong,  
 the ground  
 Of obligation, what the rule and whence  
 The sanction; till, demanding formal *proof*,  
 And seeking it in every thing, I lost <sup>302</sup>  
 All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,  
 Sick, wearied out with contrarities,  
 Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,  
 This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I  
 drooped,  
 Deeming our blessed reason of least use  
 Where wanted most: "The lordly attri-  
 butes  
 Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed,  
 "What are they but a mockery of a Being  
 Who hath in no concerns of his a test <sup>312</sup>  
 Of good and evil; knows not what to fear  
 Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;  
 And who, if those could be discerned,  
 would yet  
 Be little profited, would see, and ask  
 Where is the obligation to enforce?  
 And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,  
 As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;  
 The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not  
walk<sup>321</sup>  
With scoffers, seeking light and gay re-  
venge<sup>32</sup>  
From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate  
down  
In reconciliation with an utter waste  
Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,  
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of  
life,  
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear  
reward)  
But turned to abstract science, and there  
sought  
Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned  
Where the disturbances of space and  
time —<sup>330</sup>  
Whether in matters various, properties  
Inherent, or from human will and power  
Derived — find no admission. Then it  
was —  
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all  
good! —  
That the beloved Sister in whose sight  
Those days were passed, now speaking in  
a voice  
Of sudden admonition — like a brook  
That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now  
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every  
turn,  
Companion never lost through many a  
league —<sup>340</sup>  
Maintained for me a saving intercourse  
With my true self; for, though bedimmed  
and changed  
Much, as it seemed, I was no further  
changed  
Than as a clouded and a waning moon:  
She whispered still that brightness would  
return;  
She, in the midst of all, preserved me still  
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,  
And that alone, my office upon earth;  
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,  
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,  
By all varieties of human love<sup>351</sup>  
Assisted, led me back through opening day  
To those sweet counsels between head and  
heart  
Whence grew that genuine knowledge,  
fraught with peace,  
Which, through the later sinkings of this  
cause,  
Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now  
In the catastrophe (for so they dream,

And nothing less), when, finally to close  
And seal up all the gains of France, a  
Pope  
Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor —  
This last opprobrium, when we see a peo-  
ple,<sup>361</sup>  
That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven  
For manna, take a lesson from the dog  
Returning to his vomit; when the sun  
That rose in splendour, was alive, and  
moved  
In exultation with a living pomp  
Of clouds — his glory's natural retinue —  
Hath dropped all functions by the gods  
bestowed,  
And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,  
Sets like an Opera phantom.  
Thus, O Friend!  
Through times of honour and through times  
of shame<sup>371</sup>  
Descending, have I faithfully retraced  
The perturbations of a youthful mind  
Under a long-lived storm of great events —  
A story destined for thy ear, who now,  
Among the fallen of nations, dost abide  
Where Etna, over hill and valley, casts  
His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,  
The city of Timoleon! Righteous Heaven!  
How are the mighty prostrated! They  
first,  
They first of all that breathe should have  
awaked<sup>381</sup>  
When the great voice was heard from out  
the tombs  
Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief  
For ill-requited France, by many deemed  
A trifle only in her proudest day;  
Have been distressed to think of what she  
once  
Promised, now is; a far more sober cause  
Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land,  
To the reanimating influence lost  
Of memory, to virtue lost and hope,<sup>390</sup>  
Though with the wreck of loftier years  
bestrewn.  
But indignation works where hope is not,  
And thou, O Friend! wilt be refreshed.  
There is  
One great society alone on earth:  
The noble Living and the noble Dead.  
Thine be such converse strong and  
sanative,  
A ladder for thy spirit to reascend

To health and joy and pure contentedness;  
To me the grief confined, that thou art  
gone

From this last spot of earth, where Freedom  
now 400

Stands single in her only sanctuary;  
A lonely wanderer, art gone, by pain  
Compelled and sickness, at this latter day,  
This sorrowful reverse for all mankind.

I feel for thee, must utter what I feel:  
The sympathies erewhile in part discharged,  
Gather afresh, and will have vent again:  
My own delights do scarcely seem to me  
My own delights; the lordly Alps them-  
selves,

Those rosy peaks, from which the Morning  
looks 410

Abroad on many nations, are no more  
For me that image of pure gladness  
Which they were wont to be. Through  
kindred scenes,

For purpose, at a time, how different!  
Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart and  
soul

That Nature gives to Poets, now by thought  
Matured, and in the summer of their  
strength.

Oh! wrap him in your shades, ye giant  
woods,

On Etna's side; and thou, O flowery field  
Of Etna! is there not some nook of thine,  
From the first play-time of the infant world  
Kept sacred to restorative delight, 422  
When from afar invoked by anxious love?

Child of the mountains, among shepherds  
reared,

Ere yet familiar with the classic page,  
I learnt to dream of Sicily; and lo,  
The gloom, that, but a moment past, was  
deepened

At thy command, at her command gives  
way;

A pleasant promise, wafted from her shores,  
Comes o'er my heart: in fancy I behold 430  
Her seas yet smiling, her once happy vales;  
Nor can my tongue give utterance to a  
name

Of note belonging to that honoured isle,  
Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,  
Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul!  
That doth not yield a solace to my grief:  
And, O Theocritus, so far have some  
Prevailed among the powers of heaven and  
earth,

By their endowments, good or great, that  
they

Have had, as thou reportest, miracles 440  
Wrought for them in old time: yea, not  
unmoved,

When thinking on my own beloved friend,  
I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed  
Divine Comates, by his impious lord  
Within a chest imprisoned; how they came  
Laden from blooming grove or flowery field,  
And fed him there, alive, month after  
month,

Because the goatherd, blessèd man! had  
lips

Wet with the Muses' nectar.

Thus I soothe

The pensive moments by this calm fire-side,  
And find a thousand bounteous images 451  
To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and  
mine.

Our prayers have been accepted; thou wilt  
stand

On Etna's summit, above earth and sea,  
Triumphant, winning from the invaded  
heavens

Thoughts without bound, magnificent de-  
signs,

Worthy of poets who attuned their harps  
In wood or echoing cave, for discipline  
Of heroes; or, in reverence to the gods,  
Mid temples, served by sapient priests, and  
choirs 460

Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in vain  
Those temples, where they in their ruins yet  
Survive for inspiration, shall attract  
Thy solitary steps: and on the brink  
Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethuse;  
Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,  
Then, near some other spring — which, by  
the name

Thou gratest, willingly deceived —  
I see thee linger a glad votary,  
And not a captive pining for his home. 470

## BOOK TWELFTH

### IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED

LONG time have human ignorance and guilt  
Detained us, on what spectacles of woe  
Compelled to look, and inwardly oppressed  
With sorrow, disappointment, vexing  
thoughts,  
Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,

And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself  
 And things to hope for ! Not with these  
     began  
 Our song, and not with these our song  
     must end.  
 Ye motions of delight, that haunt the sides  
 Of the green hills; ye breezes and soft  
     airs, 10  
 Whose subtle intercourse with breathing  
     flowers,  
 Feelingly watched, might teach Man's  
     haughty race  
 How without injury to take, to give  
 Without offence; ye who, as if to show  
 The wondrous influence of power gently  
     used,  
 Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,  
 And, with a touch, shift the stupendous  
     clouds  
 Through the whole compass of the sky; ye  
     brooks,  
 Muttering along the stones, a busy noise  
 By day, a quiet sound in silent night; 20  
 Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal  
     forth  
 In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,  
 Not mute, and then retire, fearing no  
     storm;  
 And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is  
 To interpose the covert of your shades,  
 Even as a sleep, between the heart of  
     man  
 And outward troubles, between man him-  
     self,  
 Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart:  
 Oh ! that I had a music and a voice  
 Harmonious as your own, that I might tell  
 What ye have done for me. The morning  
     shines, 31  
 Nor heedeth Man's perverseness; Spring  
     returns, —  
 I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,  
 In common with the children of her love,  
 Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh  
     fields,  
 Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven  
 On wings that navigate cerulean skies.  
 So neither were complacency, nor peace,  
 Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my good  
 Through these distracted times; in Nature  
     still 40  
 Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her,  
 Which, when the spirit of evil reached its  
     height,  
 Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend ! hath chiefly  
     told  
 Of intellectual power, fostering love,  
 Dispensing truth, and, over men and things,  
 Where reason yet might hesitate, diffusing  
 Prophetic sympathies of genial faith:  
 So was I favoured — such my happy lot —  
 Until that natural graciousness of mind 50  
 Gave way to overpressure from the times  
 And their disastrous issues. What availed,  
 When spells forbade the voyager to land,  
 That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore  
 Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower  
 Of blissful gratitude and fearless love ?  
 Dare I avow that wish was mine to see,  
 And hope that future times *would* surely  
     see,  
 The man to come, parted, as by a gulph,  
 From him who had been; that I could no  
     more 60  
 Trust the elevation which had made me one  
 With the great family that still survives  
 To illuminate the abyss of ages past,  
 Sage, warrior, patriot, hero; for it seemed  
 That their best virtues were not free from  
     taint  
 Of something false and weak, that could  
     not stand  
 The open eye of Reason. Then I said,  
 "Go to the Poets, they will speak to thee  
 More perfectly of purer creatures; — yet  
 If reason be nobility in man, 70  
 Can aught be more ignoble than the man  
 Whom they delight in, blinded as he is  
 By prejudice, the miserable slave  
 Of low ambition or distempered love ? "

In such strange passion, if I may once  
     more  
 Review the past, I warred against myself —  
 A bigot to a new idolatry —  
 Like a cowed monk who hath forsworn  
     the world,  
 Zealously laboured to cut off my heart  
 From all the sources of her former strength;  
 And as, by simple waving of a wand, 81  
 The wizard instantaneously dissolves  
 Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul  
 As readily by syllogistic words  
 Those mysteries of being which have made,  
 And shall continue evermore to make,  
 Of the whole human race one brotherhood.

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far  
 Perverted, even the visible Universe

Fell under the dominion of a taste 90  
 Less spiritual, with microscopic view  
 Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral  
 world ?

O Soul of Nature ! excellent and fair !  
 That didst rejoice with me, with whom I,  
 too,  
 Rejoiced through early youth, before the  
 winds  
 And roaring waters, and in lights and  
 shades  
 That marched and countermarched about  
 the hills

In glorious apparition, Powers on whom  
 I daily waited, now all eye and now 99  
 All ear; but never long without the heart  
 Employed, and man's unfolding intellect:  
 O Soul of Nature ! that, by laws divine  
 Sustained and governed, still dost overflow  
 With an impassioned life, what feeble ones  
 Walk on this earth ! how feeble have I  
 been

When thou wert in thy strength ! Nor this  
 through stroke

Of human suffering, such as justifies  
 Remissness and inaptitude of mind,  
 But through presumption; even in pleasure  
 pleased

Unworthily, disliking here, and there 110  
 Liking; by rules of mimic art transferred  
 To things above all art; but more, — for  
 this,

Although a strong infection of the age,  
 Was never much my habit — giving way  
 To a comparison of scene with scene,  
 Bent overmuch on superficial things,  
 Pampering myself with meagre novelties  
 Of colour and proportion; to the moods  
 Of time and season, to the moral power,  
 The affections and the spirit of the place,  
 Insensible. Nor only did the love 121  
 Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt  
 My deeper feelings, but another cause,  
 More subtle and less easily explained,  
 That almost seems inherent in the creature,  
 A twofold frame of body and of mind.

I speak in recollection of a time  
 When the bodily eye, in every stage of life  
 The most despotic of our senses, gained  
 Such strength in me as often held my mind  
 In absolute dominion. Gladly here, 131  
 Entering upon abstruser argument,  
 Could I endeavour to unfold the means  
 Which Nature studiously employs to thwart

This tyranny, summons all the senses each  
 To counteract the other, and themselves,  
 And makes them all, and the objects with  
 which all

Are conversant, subservient in their turn  
 To the great ends of Liberty and Power.  
 But leave we this: enough that my de-  
 lights 140

(Such as they were) were sought insatiably.  
 Vivid the transport, vivid though not pro-  
 found;

I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to  
 rock,

Still craving combinations of new forms,  
 New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,  
 Proud of her own endowments, and re-  
 joiced

To lay the inner faculties asleep.  
 Amid the turns and counterturns, the strife  
 And various trials of our complex being,  
 As we grow up, such thralldom of that sense  
 Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a  
 maid, 151

A young enthusiast, who escaped these  
 bonds;

Her eye was not the mistress of her heart;  
 Far less did rules prescribed by passive  
 taste,

Or barren intermeddling subtleties,  
 Perplex her mind; but, wise as women are  
 When genial circumstance hath favoured  
 them,

She welcomed what was given, and craved  
 no more;

Whate'er the scene presented to her view  
 That was the best, to that she was attuned  
 By her benign simplicity of life, 161

And through a perfect happiness of soul,  
 Whose variegated feelings were in this  
 Sisters, that they were each some new de-  
 light.

Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green  
 field,

Could they have known her, would have  
 loved; methought

Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,  
 That flowers, and trees, and even the silent  
 hills,

And everything she looked on, should have  
 had

An intimation how she bore herself 170  
 Towards them and to all creatures. God  
 delights

In such a being; for, her common thoughts  
 Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called  
 forth  
 From the retirement of my native hills,  
 I loved whate'er I saw: nor lightly loved,  
 But most intensely; never dreamt of aught  
 More grand, more fair, more exquisitely  
 framed  
 Than those few nooks to which my happy  
 feet  
 Were limited. I had not at that time 180  
 Lived long enough, nor in the least sur-  
 vived  
 The first diviner influence of this world,  
 As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.  
 Worshipping them among the depth of  
 things,  
 As piety ordained, could I submit  
 To measured admiration, or to aught  
 That should preclude humility and love?  
 I felt, observed, and pondered; did not  
 judge,  
 Yea, never thought of judging; with the gift  
 Of all this glory filled and satisfied. 190  
 And afterwards, when through the gorgeous  
 Alps  
 Roaming, I carried with me the same heart:  
 In truth, the degradation — howsoe'er  
 Induced, effect, in whatsoe'er degree,  
 Of custom that prepares a partial scale  
 In which the little oft outweighs the great;  
 Or any other cause that hath been named;  
 Or lastly, aggravated by the times  
 And their impassioned sounds, which well  
 might make  
 The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes 200  
 Inaudible — was transient; I had known  
 Too forcibly, too early in my life,  
 Visitings of imaginative power  
 For this to last: I shook the habit off  
 Entirely and for ever, and again  
 In Nature's presence stood, as now I stand,  
 A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,  
 That with distinct pre-eminence retain 209  
 A renovating virtue, whence — depressed  
 By false opinion and contentious thought,  
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,  
 In trivial occupations, and the round  
 Of ordinary intercourse — our minds  
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired;  
 A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,  
 That penetrates, enables us to mount,  
 When high, more high, and lifts us up  
 when fallen.

This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks  
 Among those passages of life that give 220  
 Profoundest knowledge to what point, and  
 how,  
 The mind is lord and master — outward  
 sense  
 The obedient servant of her will. Such  
 moments  
 Are scattered everywhere, taking their date  
 From our first childhood. I remember well,  
 That once, while yet my inexperienced  
 hand  
 Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud  
 hopes  
 I mounted, and we journeyed towards the  
 hills:  
 An ancient servant of my father's house  
 Was with me, my encourager and guide:  
 We had not travelled long, ere some mis-  
 chance 231  
 Disjoined me from my comrade; and,  
 through fear  
 Dismounting, down the rough and stony  
 moor  
 I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length  
 Came to a bottom, where in former times  
 A murderer had been hung in iron chains.  
 The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the  
 bones  
 And iron case were gone; but on the turf,  
 Hard by, soon after that fell deed was  
 wrought,  
 Some unknown hand had carved the mur-  
 derer's name. 240  
 The monumental letters were inscribed  
 In times long past; but still, from year to  
 year  
 By superstition of the neighbourhood,  
 The grass is cleared away, and to this hour  
 The characters are fresh and visible:  
 A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,  
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the  
 road:  
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw  
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,  
 The beacon on the summit, and, more near,  
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head, 251  
 And seemed with difficult steps to force  
 her way  
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,  
 An ordinary sight; but I should need  
 Colours and words that are unknown to man,  
 To paint the visionary dreariness  
 Which, while I looked all round for my  
 lost guide,

Invested moorland waste and naked pool,  
The beacon crowning the lone eminence,  
The female and her garments vexed and  
tossed <sup>260</sup>

By the strong wind. When, in the blessed  
hours

Of early love, the loved one at my side,  
I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,  
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,  
And on the melancholy beacon, fell  
A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden  
gleam;

And think ye not with radiance more sub-  
lime

For these remembrances, and for the power  
They had left behind? So feeling comes  
in aid

Of feeling, and diversity of strength <sup>270</sup>  
Attends us, if but once we have been  
strong.

Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth  
Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see  
In simple childhood something of the base  
On which thy greatness stands; but this I  
feel,

That from thyself it comes, that thou must  
give,

Else never canst receive. The days gone by  
Return upon me almost from the dawn

Of life: the hiding-places of man's power  
Open; I would approach them, but they  
close. <sup>280</sup>

I see by glimpses now; when age comes on,  
May scarcely see at all; and I would give,  
While yet we may, as far as words can  
give,

Substance and life to what I feel, enshrin-  
ing,

Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past  
For future restoration. — Yet another  
Of these memorials: —

One Christmas-time,  
On the glad eve of its dear holidays,  
Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went  
forth

Into the fields, impatient for the sight <sup>290</sup>  
Of those led palfreys that should bear us  
home;

My brothers and myself. There rose a  
crag,

That, from the meeting-point of two high-  
ways

Ascending, overlooked them both, far  
stretched;

Thither, uncertain on which road to fix

My expectation, thither I repaired,  
Scout-like, and gained the summit; 't was  
a day

Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the  
grass

I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall;

Upon my right hand couched a single  
sheep, <sup>300</sup>

Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood;

With those companions at my side, I  
watched,

Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist

Gave intermitting prospect of the copse

And plain beneath. Ere we to school re-  
turned, —

That dreary time, — ere we had been ten  
days

Sojourners in my father's house, he died;

And I and my three brothers, orphans then,  
Followed his body to the grave. The  
event,

With all the sorrow that it brought, ap-  
peared <sup>310</sup>

A chastisement; and when I called to mind  
That day so lately past, when from the  
crag

I looked in such anxiety of hope;

With trite reflections of morality,

Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low

To God, Who thus corrected my desires;

And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,

And all the business of the elements,

The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,  
And the bleak music from that old stone  
wall, <sup>320</sup>

The noise of wood and water, and the mist

That on the line of each of those two roads

Advanced in such indisputable shapes;

All these were kindred spectacles and  
sounds

To which I oft repaired, and thence would  
drink,

As at a fountain; and on winter nights,

Down to this very time, when storm and  
rain

Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,

While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,

Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock

In a strong wind, some working of the  
spirit, <sup>331</sup>

Some inward agitations thence are brought,

Whate'er their office, whether to beguile

Thoughts over busy in the course they  
took,

Or animate an hour of vacant ease.



## BOOK THIRTEENTH

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED  
AND RESTORED (*concluded*)

FROM Nature doth emotion come, and  
moods

Of calmness equally are Nature's gift:  
This is her glory; these two attributes  
Are sister horns that constitute her strength.  
Hence Genius, born to thrive by inter-  
change

Of peace and excitation, finds in her  
His best and purest friend; from her re-  
ceives

That energy by which he seeks the truth,  
From her that happy stillness of the mind  
Which fits him to receive it when unsought.

Such benefit the humblest intellects 11  
Partake of, each in their degree; 't is mine  
To speak, what I myself have known and  
felt;

Smooth task! for words find easy way, in-  
spired

By gratitude, and confidence in truth.  
Long time in search of knowledge did I  
range

The field of human life, in heart and mind  
Benighted; but, the dawn beginning now  
To re-appear, 't was proved that not in vain  
I had been taught to reverence a Power 20  
That is the visible quality and shape  
And image of right reason; that matures  
Her processes by steadfast laws; gives birth  
To no impatient or fallacious hopes,  
No heat of passion or excessive zeal,  
No vain conceits; provokes to no quick  
turns

Of self-applauding intellect; but trains  
To meekness, and exalts by humble faith;  
Holds up before the mind intoxicate  
With present objects, and the busy dance 30  
Of things that pass away, a temperate show  
Of objects that endure; and by this course  
Disposes her, when over-fondly set  
On throwing off incumbrances, to seek  
In man, and in the frame of social life,  
Whate'er there is desirable and good  
Of kindred permanence, unchanged in form  
And function, or, through strict vicissitude  
Of life and death, revolving. Above all  
Were re-established now those watchful  
thoughts 40

Which, seeing little worthy or sublime  
In what the Historian's pen so much delights

To blazon — power and energy detached  
From moral purpose — early tutored me  
To look with feelings of fraternal love  
Upon the unassuming things that hold  
A silent station in this beauteous world.

Thus moderated, thus composed, I found  
Once more in Man an object of delight,  
Of pure imagination, and of love; 50  
And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged,  
Again I took the intellectual eye  
For my instructor, studious more to see  
Great truths, than touch and handle little  
ones.

Knowledge was given accordingly; my trust  
Became more firm in feelings that had stood  
The test of such a trial; clearer far  
My sense of excellence — of right and  
wrong:

The promise of the present time retired 59  
Into its true proportion; sanguine schemes,  
Ambitious projects, pleased me less; I sought  
For present good in life's familiar face,  
And built thereon my hopes of good to come.

With settling judgments now of what  
would last

And what would disappear; prepared to  
find

Presumption, folly, madness, in the men  
Who thrust themselves upon the passive  
world

As Rulers of the world; to see in these,  
Even when the public welfare is their aim,  
Plans without thought, or built on theories  
Vague and unsound; and having brought  
the books 71

Of modern statisticians to their proper test,  
Life, human life, with all its sacred claims  
Of sex and age, and heaven-descended  
rights,

Mortal, or those beyond the reach of death;  
And having thus discerned how dire a thing  
Is worshipped in that idol proudly named  
"The Wealth of Nations," where alone that  
wealth

Is lodged, and how increased; and having  
gained

A more judicious knowledge of the worth  
And dignity of individual man, 81

No composition of the brain, but man  
Of whom we read, the man whom we be-  
hold

With our own eyes — I could not but en-  
quire —

Not with less interest than heretofore,  
But greater, though in spirit more subdued —

Why is this glorious creature to be found  
One only in ten thousand ? What one is,  
Why may not millions be ? What bars are  
thrown

By Nature in the way of such a hope ? 90  
Our animal appetites and daily wants,  
Are these obstructions insurmountable ?  
If not, then others vanish into air.

"Inspect the basis of the social pile:  
Enquire," said I, "how much of mental  
power

And genuine virtue they possess who live  
By bodily toil, labour exceeding far  
Their due proportion, under all the weight  
Of that injustice which upon ourselves 99  
Ourselves entail." Such estimate to frame  
I chiefly looked (what need to look beyond ?)  
Among the natural abodes of men,  
Fields with their rural works; recalled to  
mind

My earliest notices; with these compared  
The observations made in later youth,  
And to that day continued. — For, the time  
Had never been when throes of mighty  
Nations

And the world's tumult unto me could yield,  
How far so'er transported and possessed,  
Full measure of content; but still I craved  
An intermingling of distinct regards 111  
And truths of individual sympathy

Nearer ourselves. Such often might be  
gleaned  
From the great City, else it must have  
proved

To me a heart-depressing wilderness;  
But much was wanting: therefore did I turn  
To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely roads;  
Sought you enriched with everything I  
prized,

With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh! next to one dear state of bliss,  
vouchsafed, 120

Alas! to few in this untoward world,  
The bliss of walking daily in life's prime  
Through field or forest with the maid we  
love,

While yet our hearts are young, while yet  
we breathe

Nothing but happiness, in some lone nook,  
Deep vale, or anywhere, the home of both,  
From which it would be misery to stir:

Oh! next to such enjoyment of our youth,  
In my esteem, next to such dear delight,  
Was that of wandering on from day to day  
Where I could meditate in peace, and cull  
Knowledge that step by step might lead  
me on 132

To wisdom; or, as lightsome as a bird  
Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,  
Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or  
groves,

Which lacked not voice to welcome me in  
turn;

And, when that pleasant toil had ceased to  
please,

Converse with men, where if we meet a face  
We almost meet a friend, on naked heaths  
With long long ways before, by cottage  
bench, 140

Or well-spring where the weary traveller  
rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his eye  
The windings of a public way ? the sight,  
Familiar object as it is, hath wrought  
On my imagination since the morn  
Of childhood, when a disappearing line,  
One daily present to my eyes, that crossed  
The naked summit of a far-off hill  
Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,  
Was like an invitation into space 150  
Boundless, or guide into eternity.

Yes, something of the grandeur which in-  
vests

The mariner, who sails the roaring sea  
Through storm and darkness, early in my  
mind

Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the earth;  
Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.  
Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites;  
From many other uncouth vagrants (passed  
In fear) have walked with quicker step; but  
why

Take note of this ? When I began to en-  
quire, 160  
To watch and question those I met, and  
speak

Without reserve to them, the lonely roads  
Were open schools in which I daily read  
With most delight the passions of mankind,  
Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears,  
revealed;

There saw into the depth of human souls,  
Souls that appear to have no depth at all  
To careless eyes. And — now convinced at  
heart

How little those formalities, to which  
 With overweening trust alone we give 170  
 The name of Education, have to do  
 With real feeling and just sense; how vain  
 A correspondence with the talking world  
 Proves to the most; and called to make good  
 search

If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked  
 With toil, be therefore yoked with igno-  
 rance;

If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,  
 And intellectual strength so rare a boon —  
 I prized such walks still more, for there I  
 found

Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure peace  
 And steadiness, and healing and repose 181  
 To every angry passion. There I heard,  
 From mouths of men obscure and lowly,  
 truths

Replete with honour; sounds in unison  
 With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong affection,  
 love

Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed  
 A gift, to use a term which they would use,  
 Of vulgar nature; that its growth requires  
 Retirement, leisure, language purified 190  
 By manners studied and elaborate;  
 That whoso feels such passion in its strength  
 Must live within the very light and air  
 Of courteous usages refined by art.  
 True is it, where oppression worse than  
 death

Salutes the being at his birth, where grace  
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,  
 And poverty and labour in excess  
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground  
 Of the affections, and to Nature's self 200  
 Oppose a deeper nature; there, indeed,  
 Love cannot be; nor does it thrive with ease  
 Among the close and overcrowded haunts  
 Of cities, where the human heart is sick,  
 And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.  
 — Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I  
 feel

How we mislead each other; above all,  
 How books mislead us, seeking their reward  
 From judgments of the wealthy Few, who  
 see

By artificial lights; how they debase 210  
 The Many for the pleasure of those Few;  
 Effeminately level down the truth  
 To certain general notions, for the sake  
 Of being understood at once, or else

Through want of better knowledge in the  
 heads

That framed them; flattering self-conceit  
 with words,

That, while they most ambitiously set forth  
 Extrinsic differences, the outward marks  
 Whereby society has parted man  
 From man, neglect the universal heart. 220

Here, calling up to mind what then I  
 saw,

A youthful traveller, and see daily now  
 In the familiar circuit of my home,  
 Here might I pause, and bend in reverence  
 To Nature, and the power of human minds,  
 To men as they are men within themselves.  
 How oft high service is performed within,  
 When all the external man is rude in  
 show, —

Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
 But a mere mountain chapel, that pro-  
 tects 230

Its simple worshippers from sun and  
 shower.

Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,  
 If future years mature me for the task,  
 Will I record the praises, making verse  
 Deal boldly with substantial things; in  
 truth

And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
 That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
 Where it is due: thus haply shall I teach,  
 Inspire; through unadulterated ears  
 Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope, — my  
 theme 240

No other than the very heart of man,  
 As found among the best of those who  
 live —

Not unexalted by religious faith,  
 Nor uninformed by books, good books,  
 though few —

In Nature's presence: thence may I select  
 Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight;  
 And miserable love, that is not pain  
 To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
 Therefrom to human kind, and what we  
 are.

Be mine to follow with no timid step 250  
 Where knowledge leads me: it shall be my  
 pride

That I have dared to tread this holy  
 ground,

Speaking no dream, but things oracular;  
 Matter not lightly to be heard by those  
 Who to the letter of the outward promise

Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the  
world

Accomplished; minds whose faculties are  
then

Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired. 260  
Men may be found of other mould than  
these,

Who are their own upholders, to them-  
selves

Encouragement, and energy, and will,  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively  
words

As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are among the walks of homely life  
Still higher, men for contemplation framed,  
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of  
phrase;

Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would  
sink

Beneath them, summoned to such inter-  
course: 270

Theirs is the language of the heavens, the  
power,

The thought, the image, and the silent  
joy:

Words are but under-agents in their souls;  
When they are grasping with their greatest  
strength,

They do not breathe among them: this I  
speak

In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts  
For His own service; knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive  
Convictions still more strong than hereto-  
fore, 280

Not only that the inner frame is good,  
And graciously composed, but that, no less,  
Nature for all conditions wants not power  
To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,  
The outside of her creatures, and to breathe  
Grandeur upon the very humblest face  
Of human life. I felt that the array  
Of act and circumstance, and visible form,  
Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind  
What passion makes them; that meanwhile  
the forms 290

Of Nature have a passion in themselves,  
That intermingles with those works of man  
To which she summons him; although the  
works

Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own;

And that the Genius of the Poet hence  
May boldly take his way among mankind  
Wherever Nature leads; that he hath  
stood

By Nature's side among the men of old,  
And so shall stand for ever. Dearest  
Friend!

If thou partake the animating faith 300  
That Poets, even as Prophets, each with  
each

Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,  
Have each his own peculiar faculty,  
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to per-  
ceive

Objects unseen before, thou wilt not blame  
The humblest of this band who dares to  
hope

That unto him hath also been vouchsafed  
An insight that in some sort he possesses,  
A privilege whereby a work of his,  
Proceeding from a source of untaught  
things, 310

Creative and enduring, may become  
A power like one of Nature's. To a hope  
Not less ambitious once among the wilds  
Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was  
raised;

There, as I ranged at will the pastoral  
downs

Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare  
white roads

Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,  
Time with his retinue of ages fled  
Backwards, nor checked his flight until I  
saw

Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear; 320  
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and  
there,

A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,  
With shield and stone-axe, stride across the  
world;

The voice of spears was heard, the rattling  
spear

Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in  
strength,

Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.  
I called on Darkness — but before the word  
Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed to  
take

All objects from my sight; and lo! again  
The Desert visible by dismal flames; 330

It is the sacrificial altar, fed  
With living men — how deep the groans!  
the voice

Of those that crowd the giant wicker thrills

The monumental hillocks, and the pomp  
 Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.  
 At other moments — (for through that  
     wide waste  
 Three summer days I roamed) where'er  
     the Plain  
 Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or  
     mounds,  
 That yet survive, a work, as some divine,  
 Shaped by the Druids, so to represent 340  
 Their knowledge of the heavens, and image  
     forth  
 The constellations — gently was I charmed  
 Into a waking dream, a reverie  
 That, with believing eyes, where'er I  
     turned,  
 Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white  
     wands  
 Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,  
 Alternately, and plain below, while breath  
 Of music swayed their motions, and the  
     waste  
 Rejoiced with them and me in those sweet  
     sounds.

    This for the past, and things that may  
     be viewed 350  
 Or fancied in the obscurity of years  
 From monumental hints: and thou, O  
     Friend!  
 Pleased with some unpremeditated strains  
 That served those wanderings to beguile,  
     hast said  
 That then and there my mind had exercised  
 Upon the vulgar forms of present things,  
 The actual world of our familiar days,  
 Yet higher power; had caught from them  
     a tone,  
 An image, and a character, by books  
 Not hitherto reflected. Call we this 360  
 A partial judgment — and yet why? for  
     then  
 We were as strangers; and I may not  
     speak  
 Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,  
 Which on thy young imagination, trained  
 In the great City, broke like light from  
     far.  
 Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself  
 Witness and judge; and I remember well  
 That in life's every-day appearances  
 I seemed about this time to gain clear sight  
 Of a new world — a world, too, that was fit  
 To be transmitted, and to other eyes 371  
 Made visible; as ruled by those fixed laws

Whence spiritual dignity originates,  
 Which do both give it being and maintain  
 A balance, an ennobling interchange  
 Of action from without and from within;  
 The excellence, pure function, and best  
     power  
 Both of the objects seen, and eye that sees.

## BOOK FOURTEENTH

## CONCLUSION

IN one of those excursions (may they ne'er  
 Fade from remembrance!) through the  
     Northern tracts  
 Of Cambria ranging with a youthful friend,  
 I left Bethgelert's huts at couching-time,  
 And westward took my way, to see the sun  
 Rise, from the top of Snowdon. To the  
     door  
 Of a rude cottage at the mountain's base  
 We came, and roused the shepherd who  
     attends  
 The adventurous stranger's steps, a trusty  
     guide;  
 Then, cheered by short refreshment, sallied  
     forth. 10

    It was a close, warm, breezeless summer  
     night,  
 Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping fog  
 Low-hung and thick that covered all the  
     sky;  
 But, undiscouraged, we began to climb  
 The mountain-side. The mist soon girt us  
     round,  
 And, after ordinary travellers' talk  
 With our conductor, pensively we sank  
 Each into commerce with his private  
     thoughts:  
 Thus did we breast the ascent, and by my-  
     self  
 Was nothing either seen or heard that  
     checked 20  
 Those musings or diverted, save that once  
 The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the  
     craggs,  
 Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog, teased  
 His coiled-up prey with barkings turbulent.  
 This small adventure, for even such it  
     seemed  
 In that wild place and at the dead of night,  
 Being over and forgotten, on we wound  
 In silence as before. With forehead bent  
 Earthward, as if in opposition set

Against an enemy, I panted up <sup>30</sup>  
 With eager pace, and no less eager thoughts.  
 Thus might we wear a midnight hour away,  
 Ascending at loose distance each from each,  
 And I, as chanced, the foremost of the  
 band;

When at my feet the ground appeared to  
 brighten,

And with a step or two seemed brighter  
 still;

Nor was time given to ask or learn the  
 cause,

For instantly a light upon the turf  
 Fell like a flash, and lo! as I looked up  
 The Moon hung naked in a firmament <sup>40</sup>  
 Of azure without cloud, and at my feet  
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.

A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved  
 All over this still ocean; and beyond,  
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,  
 In headlands, tongues, and promontory  
 shapes,

Into the main Atlantic, that appeared  
 To dwindle, and give up his majesty,  
 Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.  
 Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment  
 none <sup>50</sup>

Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars  
 Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light  
 In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon,  
 Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed  
 Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay  
 All meek and silent, save that through a  
 rift —

Not distant from the shore whereon we  
 stood,

A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-  
 place —

Mounted the roar of waters, torrents,  
 streams

Innumerable, roaring with one voice! <sup>60</sup>  
 Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,  
 For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved  
 That vision, given to spirits of the night  
 And three chance human wanderers, in calm  
 thought

Reflected, it appeared to me the type  
 Of a majestic intellect, its acts  
 And its possessions, what it has and craves,  
 What in itself it is, and would become.  
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind <sup>70</sup>  
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods  
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear

Its voices issuing forth to silent light  
 In one continuous stream; a mind sustained  
 By recognitions of transcendent power,  
 In sense conducting to ideal fogn,  
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.  
 One function, above all, of such a mind  
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting  
 forth,

'Mid circumstances awful and sublime, <sup>80</sup>  
 That mutual domination which she loves  
 To exert upon the face of outward things,  
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed  
 With interchangeable supremacy,  
 That men, least sensitive, see, hear, per-  
 ceive,

And cannot choose but feel. The power,  
 which all

Acknowledge when thus moved, which Na-  
 ture thus

To bodily sense exhibits, is the express  
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty  
 That higher minds bear with them as their  
 own. <sup>90</sup>

This is the very spirit in which they deal  
 With the whole compass of the universe:  
 They from their native selves can send  
 abroad

Kindred mutations; for themselves create  
 A like existence; and, where'er it dawns  
 Created for them, catch it, or are caught  
 By its inevitable mastery,  
 Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound  
 Of harmony from Heaven's remotest  
 spheres.

Them the enduring and the transient both  
 Serve to exult; they build up greatest  
 things <sup>101</sup>

From least suggestions; ever on the watch,  
 Willing to work and to be wrought upon,  
 They need not extraordinary calls  
 To rouse them; in a world of life they  
 live,

By sensible impressions not enthralled,  
 But by their quickening impulse made more  
 prompt

To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,  
 And with the generations of mankind  
 Spread over time, past, present, and to  
 come, <sup>110</sup>

Age after age, till Time shall be no more.  
 Such minds are truly from the Deity,  
 For they are Powers; and hence the high-  
 est bliss

That flesh can know is theirs — the con-  
 sciousness

Of Whom they are, habitually infused  
 Through every image and through every  
     thought,  
 And all affections by communion raised  
 From earth to heaven, from human to di-  
     vine;  
 Hence endless occupation for the Soul,  
 Whether discursive or intuitive; <sup>120</sup>  
 Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,  
 Emotions which best foresight need not fear,  
 Most worthy then of trust when most in-  
     tense.  
 Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that  
     crush  
 Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ  
 May with fit reverence be applied—that  
     peace  
 Which passeth understanding, that repose  
 In moral judgments which from this pure  
     source  
 Must come, or will by man be sought in vain.

Oh! who is he that hath his whole life  
     long <sup>130</sup>  
 Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in him-  
     self?  
 For this alone is genuine liberty:  
 Where is the favoured being who hath held  
 That course unchecked, unerring, and un-  
     tired,  
 In one perpetual progress smooth and  
     bright?—  
 A humbler destiny have we retraced,  
 And told of lapse and hesitating choice,  
 And backward wanderings along thorny  
     ways:  
 Yet—compassed round by mountain soli-  
     tudes,  
 Within whose solemn temple I received <sup>140</sup>  
 My earliest visitations, careless then  
 Of what was given me; and which now I  
     range,  
 A meditative, oft a suffering, man—  
 Do I declare—in accents which, from  
     truth  
 Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend  
 Their modulation with these vocal streams—  
 That, whatsoever falls my better mind,  
 Revolving with the accidents of life,  
 May have sustained, that, howsoe'er mis-  
     led,  
 Never did I, in quest of right and wrong, <sup>150</sup>  
 Tamper with conscience from a private  
     aim;  
 Nor was in any public hope the dupe

Of selfish passions; nor did ever yield  
 Wilfully to mean cares or low pursuits,  
 But shrunk with apprehensive jealousy  
 From every combination which might aid  
 The tendency, too potent in itself,  
 Of use and custom to bow down the soul  
 Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,  
 And substitute a universe of death <sup>160</sup>  
 For that which moves with light and life  
     informed,  
 Actual, divine, and true. To fear and love,  
 To love as prime and chief, for there fear  
     ends,  
 Be this ascribed; to early intercourse,  
 In presence of sublime or beautiful forms,  
 With the adverse principles of pain and  
     joy—  
 Evil as one is rashly named by men  
 Who know not what they speak. By love  
     subsists  
 All lasting grandeur, by pervading love;  
 That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the  
     fields <sup>170</sup>  
 In balmy spring-time full of rising flowers  
 And joyous creatures; see that pair, the  
     lamb  
 And the lamb's mother, and their tender  
     ways  
 Shall touch thee to the heart; thou callest  
     this love,  
 And not inaptly so, for love it is,  
 Far as it carries thee. In some green  
     bower  
 Rest, and be not alone, but have thou there  
 The One who is thy choice of all the world:  
 There linger, listening, gazing, with delight  
 Impassioned, but delight how pitiable! <sup>180</sup>  
 Unless this love by a still higher love  
 Be hallowed, love that breathes not without  
     awe;  
 Love that adores, but on the knees of  
     prayer,  
 By heaven inspired; that frees from chains  
     the soul,  
 Lifted, in union with the purest, best,  
 Of earth-born passions, on the wings of  
     praise  
 Bearing a tribute to the Almighty's Throne.

This spiritual Love acts not nor can exist  
 Without Imagination, which, in truth,  
 Is but another name for absolute power <sup>190</sup>  
 And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,  
 And Reason in her most exalted mood.  
 This faculty hath been the feeding source

Of our long labour: we have traced the  
stream

From the blind cavern whence is faintly  
heard

Its natal murmur; followed it to light  
And open day; accompanied its course  
Among the ways of Nature, for a time  
Lost sight of it bewildered and engulfed;  
Then given it greeting as it rose once  
more 200

In strength, reflecting from its placid breast  
The works of man and face of human life;  
And lastly, from its progress have we  
drawn

Faith in life endless, the sustaining thought  
Of human Being, Eternity, and God.

Imagination having been our theme,  
So also hath that intellectual Love,  
For they are each in each, and cannot stand  
Dividually. — Here must thou be, O Man!  
Power to thyself; no Helper hast thou  
here; 210

Here keepest thou in singleness thy state:  
No other can divide with thee this work:  
No secondary hand can intervene  
To fashion this ability; 't is thine,  
The prime and vital principle is thine  
In the recesses of thy nature, far  
From any reach of outward fellowship,  
Else is not thine at all. But joy to him,  
Oh, joy to him who here hath sown, hath  
laid

Here, the foundation of his future years! 220  
For all that friendship, all that love can do,  
All that a darling countenance can look  
Or dear voice utter, to complete the man,  
Perfect him, made imperfect in himself,  
All shall be his: and he whose soul hath  
risen

Up to the height of feeling intellect  
Shall want no humbler tenderness; his  
heart

Be tender as a nursing mother's heart;  
Of female softness shall his life be full,  
Of humble cares and delicate desires, 230  
Mild interests and gentlest sympathies.

Child of my parents! Sister of my soul!  
Thanks in sincerest verse have been else-  
where

Poured out for all the early tenderness  
Which I from thee imbibed: and 't is most  
true

That later seasons owed to thee no less;

For, spite of thy sweet influence and the  
touch

Of kindred hands that opened out the  
springs

Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite  
Of all that unassisted I had marked 240  
In life or nature of those charms minute  
That win their way into the heart by  
stealth

(Still to the very going-out of youth)

I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,  
And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton  
sings,

Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down  
This over-sternness; but for thee, dear  
Friend!

My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had  
stood

In her original self too confident,  
Retained too long a countenance severe; 250  
A rock with torrents roaring, with the  
clouds

Familiar, and a favourite of the stars:

But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,  
Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the  
breeze,

And teach the little birds to build their  
nests

And warble in its chambers. At a time  
When Nature, destined to remain so long  
Foremost in my affections, had fallen back  
Into a second place, pleased to become  
A handmaid to a nobler than herself, 260  
When every day brought with it some new  
sense

Of exquisite regard for common things,  
And all the earth was budding with these  
gifts

Of more refined humanity, thy breath,  
Dear Sister! was a kind of gentler spring  
That went before my steps. Thereafter  
came

One whom with thee friendship had early  
paired;

She came, no more a phantom to adorn  
A moment, but an inmate of the heart,  
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined 270  
To penetrate the lofty and the low;  
Even as one essence of pervading light  
Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars  
And the meek worm that feeds her lonely  
lamp

Couched in the dewy grass.

With such a theme,  
Coleridge! with this my argument, of thee



Shall I be silent? O capacious Soul!  
Placed on this earth to love and understand,  
And from thy presence shed the light of  
love,

Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of? 280  
Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts  
Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed  
Her overweening grasp; thus thoughts and  
things

In the self-haunting spirit learned to take  
More rational proportions; mystery,  
The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,  
Of life and death, time and eternity,  
Admitted more habitually a mild  
Interposition — a serene delight  
In closer gathering cares, such as become  
A human creature, howsoever endowed, 291  
Poet, or destined for a humbler name;  
And so the deep enthusiastic joy,  
The rapture of the hallelujah sent  
From all that breathes and is, was chastened,  
stemmed

And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust  
In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay  
Of Providence; and in reverence for duty,  
Here, if need be, struggling with storms,  
and there

Strewing in peace life's humblest ground  
with herbs, 300

At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is  
brought

To its appointed close: the discipline  
And consummation of a Poet's mind,  
In everything that stood most prominent,  
Have faithfully been pictured; we have  
reached

The time (our guiding object from the first)  
When we may, not presumptuously, I hope,  
Suppose my powers so far confirmed, and  
such

My knowledge, as to make me capable 310  
Of building up a Work that shall endure.  
Yet much hath been omitted, as need was;  
Of books how much! and even of the other  
wealth

That is collected among woods and fields,  
Far more: for Nature's secondary grace  
Hath hitherto been barely touched upon,  
The charm more superficial that attends  
Her works, as they present to Fancy's choice  
Apt illustrations of the moral world,  
Caught at a glance, or traced with curious  
pains. 320

Finally, and above all, O Friend! (I  
speak

With due regret) how much is overlooked  
In human nature and her subtle ways,  
As studied first in our own hearts, and then  
In life among the passions of mankind,  
Varying their composition and their hue,  
Where'er we move, under the diverse shapes  
That individual character presents

To an attentive eye. For progress meet,  
Along this intricate and difficult path, 330  
Whate'er was wanting, something had I  
gained,

As one of many schoolfellows compelled,  
In hardy independence, to stand up  
Amid conflicting interests, and the shock  
Of various tempers; to endure and note  
What was not understood, though known  
to be;

Among the mysteries of love and hate,  
Honour and shame, looking to right and  
left,

Unchecked by innocence too delicate,  
And moral notions too intolerant, 340  
Sympathies too contracted. Hence, when  
called

To take a station among men, the step  
Was easier, the transition more secure,  
More profitable also; for, the mind  
Learns from such timely exercise to keep  
In wholesome separation the two natures,  
The one that feels, the other that observes.

Yet one word more of personal concern; —  
Since I withdrew unwillingly from France,  
I led an undomestic wanderer's life 350  
In London chiefly harboured, whence I  
roamed,

Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot  
Of rural England's cultivated vales  
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth — (he  
bore

The name of Calvert — it shall live, if  
words

Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief  
That by endowments not from me withheld  
Good might be furthered — in his last decay  
By a bequest sufficient for my needs  
Enabled me to pause for choice, and walk  
At large and unrestrained; nor damped too  
soon 361

By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, yet  
Far less a common follower of the world,  
He deemed that my pursuits and labours  
lay

Apart from all that leads to wealth, or  
even

A necessary maintenance insures,  
Without some hazard to the finer sense;  
He cleared a passage for me, and the stream  
Flowed in the bent of Nature.

Having now  
Told what best merits mention, further  
pains 370

Our present purpose seems not to require,  
And I have other tasks. Recall to mind  
The mood in which this labour was begun,  
O Friend! The termination of my course  
Is nearer now, much nearer; yet even then,  
In that distraction and intense desire,  
I said unto the life which I had lived,  
Where art thou? Hear I not a voice from  
thee

Which 't is reproach to hear? Anon I rose  
As if on wings, and saw beneath me  
stretched 380

Vast prospect of the world which I had  
been

And was; and hence this Song, which, like  
a lark,

I have protracted, in the unwearied heavens  
Singing, and often with more plaintive  
voice

To earth attempered and her deep-drawn  
sighs,

Yet centring all in love, and in the end  
All grateful, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,  
And, with life, power to accomplish aught  
of worth,

That will be deemed no insufficient plea 390  
For having given the story of myself,  
Is all uncertain: but, beloved Friend!

When, looking back, thou seest, in clearer  
view

Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,  
That summer, under whose indulgent skies,  
Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we  
roved

Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan  
combs,

Thou in bewitching words, with happy  
heart,

Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient  
Man,

The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes  
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel; 401  
And I, associate with such labour, steeped  
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,

Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was  
found,

After the perils of his moonlight ride,  
Near the loud waterfall; or he who sate  
In misery near the miserable Thorn —  
When thou dost to that summer turn thy  
thoughts,

And hast before thee all which then we  
were,

To thee, in memory of that happiness, 410  
It will be known, by thee at least, my  
Friend!

Felt, that the history of a Poet's mind  
Is labour not unworthy of regard;  
To thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift  
Have been prepared, not with the buoyant  
spirits

That were our daily portion when we first  
Together wanted in wild Poesy,  
But, under pressure of a private grief,  
Keen and enduring, which the mind and  
heart, 420

That in this meditative history  
Have been laid open, needs must make me  
feel

More deeply, yet enable me to bear  
More firmly; and a comfort now hath risen  
From hope that thou art near, and wilt be  
soon

Restored to us in renovated health;  
When, after the first mingling of our tears, 432  
'Mong other consolations, we may draw  
Some pleasure from this offering of my love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,  
And all will be complete, thy race be run,  
Thy monument of glory will be raised; 432  
Then, though (too weak to tread the ways  
of truth)

This age fall back to old idolatry,  
Though men return to servitude as fast  
As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame,  
By nations, sink together, we shall still  
Find solace — knowing what we have learnt  
to know,

Rich in true happiness if allowed to be  
Faithful alike in forwarding a day 440  
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work  
(Should Providence such grace to us vouch-  
safe)

Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.  
Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak  
A lasting inspiration, sanctified

By reason, blest by faith: what we have  
 loved,  
 Others will love, and we will teach them  
 how;  
 Instruct them how the mind of man becomes  
 A thousand times more beautiful than the  
 earth

On which he dwells, above this frame of  
 things <sup>450</sup>  
 (Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes  
 And fears of men, doth still remain un-  
 changed)  
 In beauty exalted, as it is itself  
 Of quality and fabric more divine.

## THE RECLUSE

1800 (?). 1888

## PART FIRST

## BOOK FIRST — HOME AT GRASMERE

ONCE to the verge of yon steep barrier  
 came  
 A roving school-boy; what the adventurer's  
 age  
 Hath now escaped his memory — but the  
 hour,  
 One of a golden summer holiday,  
 He well remembers, though the year be  
 gone —

Alone and devious from afar he came;  
 And, with a sudden influx overpowered  
 At sight of this seclusion, he forgot  
 His haste, for hasty had his footsteps been  
 As boyish his pursuits; and sighing said, <sup>10</sup>  
 "What happy fortune were it here to live!  
 And, if a thought of dying, if a thought  
 Of mortal separation, could intrude  
 With paradise before him, here to die!"  
 No Prophet was he, had not even a hope,  
 Scarcely a wish, but one bright pleasing  
 thought,

A fancy in the heart of what might be  
 The lot of others, never could be his.

The station whence he looked was soft  
 and green,

Not giddy yet aerial, with a depth <sup>20</sup>  
 Of vale below, a height of hills above.  
 For rest of body perfect was the spot,  
 All that luxurious nature could desire;  
 But stirring to the spirit; who could gaze  
 And not feel motions there? He thought  
 of clouds

That sail on winds: of breezes that delight  
 To play on water, or in endless chase  
 Pursue each other through the yielding  
 plain

Of grass or corn, over and through and  
 through,

In billow after billow, evermore <sup>30</sup>  
 Disporting — nor unmindful was the boy  
 Of sunbeams, shadows, butterflies and birds;  
 Of fluttering sylphs and softly-gliding Fays,  
 Genii, and winged angels that are Lords  
 Without restraint of all which they behold.  
 The illusion strengthening as he gazed, he  
 felt

That such unfettered liberty was his,  
 Such power and joy; but only for this end,  
 To flit from field to rock, from rock to field,  
 From shore to island, and from isle to  
 shore, <sup>40</sup>

From open ground to covert, from a bed  
 Of meadow-flowers into a tuft of wood;  
 From high to low, from low to high, yet  
 still

Within the bound of this huge concave;  
 here

Must be his home, this valley be his world.  
 Since that day forth the Place to him —  
 to me

(For I who live to register the truth  
 Was that same young and happy Being)  
 became

As beautiful to thought, as it had been  
 When present, to the bodily sense; a haunt  
 Of pure affections, shedding upon joy <sup>51</sup>  
 A brighter joy; and through such damp  
 and gloom

Of the gay mind, as oftentimes splenetic youth  
 Mistakes for sorrow, darting beams of light  
 That no self-cherished sadness could with-  
 stand;

And now 't is mine, perchance for life, dear  
 Vale,

Beloved Grasmere (let the wandering  
 streams

Take up, the cloud-capt hills repeat, the  
 Name)

One of thy lowly Dwellings is my Home.

And was the cost so great ? and could it  
seem 69

An act of courage, and the thing itself  
A conquest ? who must bear the blame ?  
Sage man

Thy prudence, thy experience, thy desires,  
Thy apprehensions — blush thou for them  
all.

Yes the realities of life so cold,  
So cowardly, so ready to betray,  
So stinted in the measure of their grace  
As we pronounce them, doing them much  
wrong,

Have been to me more bountiful than hope,  
Less timid than desire — but that is past. 70

On Nature's invitation do I come,  
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mis-  
lead,

That made the calmest, fairest spot of earth  
With all its unappropriated good  
My own; and not mine only, for with me  
Entrenched, say rather peacefully embow-  
ered,

Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
A younger Orphan of a home extinct,  
The only Daughter of my Parents dwells.

Ay, think on that, my heart, and cease to  
stir, 80

Pause upon that and let the breathing frame  
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.

— Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God  
For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
where then

Shall gratitude find rest ? Mine eyes did  
ne'er

Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
Take pleasure in the midst of happy  
thoughts,

But either She whom now I have, who now  
Divides with me this loved abode, was  
there

Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps  
turned, 90

Her voice was like a hidden Bird that sang.  
The thought of her was like a flash of light,  
Or an unseen companionship, a breath  
Of fragrance independent of the Wind.  
In all my goings, in the new and old  
Of all my meditations, and in this  
Favourite of all, in this the most of all.

— What being, therefore, since the birth of  
Man

Had ever more abundant cause to speak  
Thanks, and if favours of the Heavenly  
Muse 100

Make him more thankful, then to call on  
Verse

To aid him and in song resound his joy ?  
The boon is absolute; surpassing grace  
To me hath been vouchsafed; among the  
bowers

Of blissful Eden this was neither given  
Nor could be given, possession of the good  
Which had been sighed for, ancient thought  
fulfilled,

And dear Imaginations realised,  
Up to their highest measure, yea and more.  
Embrace me then, ye Hills, and close me  
in; 110

Now in the clear and open day I feel  
Your guardianship; I take it to my heart;  
'T is like the solemn shelter of the night.  
But I would call thee beautiful, for mild,  
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,  
Dear Valley, having in thy face a smile,  
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou  
art pleased,

Pleased with thy crags and woody steep,  
thy Lake,

Its one green island and its winding shores;  
The multitude of little rocky hills, 120  
Thy Church and cottages of mountain stone  
Clustered like stars some few, but single  
most,

And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks  
Like separated stars with clouds between.

What want we ? have we not perpetual  
streams,

Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh  
green fields,

And mountains not less green, and flocks  
and herds,

And thickets full of songsters, and the voice  
Of lordly birds, an unexpected sound 130  
Heard now and then from morn to latest eve,  
Admonishing the man who walks below  
Of solitude and silence in the sky ?

These have we, and a thousand nooks of  
earth

Have also these, but nowhere else is found,  
Nowhere (or is it fancy ?) can be found  
The one sensation that is here; 't is here,  
Here as it found its way into my heart  
In childhood, here as it abides by day,  
By night, here only; or in chosen minds 140  
That take it with them hence, where'er they  
go.

— 'T is, but I cannot name it, 't is the sense  
Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,

A blended holiness of earth and sky,  
 Something that makes this individual spot,  
 This small abiding-place of many men,  
 A termination, and a last retreat,  
 A centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,  
 A whole without dependence or defect,  
 Made for itself, and happy in itself, <sup>150</sup>  
 Perfect contentment, Unity entire.

Bleak season was it, turbulent and bleak,  
 When hitherward we journeyed side by side  
 Through burst of sunshine and through fly-  
 ing showers;  
 Paced the long vales — how long they were  
 — and yet  
 How fast that length of way was left be-  
 hind,  
 Wensley's rich Vale, and Sedbergh's naked  
 heights.

The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,  
 And drove us onward like two ships at sea,  
 Or like two birds, companions in mid-air,  
 Parted and reunited by the blast. <sup>162</sup>

Stern was the face of nature; we rejoiced  
 In that stern countenance, for our souls  
 thence drew

A feeling of their strength. The naked  
 trees,

The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
 To question us. "Whence come ye, to  
 what end?"

They seemed to say. "What would ye,"  
 said the shower,

"Wild Wanderers, whither through my  
 dark domain?"

The sunbeam said, "Be happy." When  
 this vale <sup>170</sup>

We entered, bright and solemn was the sky  
 That faced us with a passionate welcoming,  
 And led us to our threshold. Daylight  
 failed

Insensibly, and round us gently fell  
 Composing darkness, with a quiet load  
 Of full contentment, in a little shed  
 Disturbed, uneasy in itself as seemed,  
 And wondering at its new inhabitants.  
 It loves us now, this Vale so beautiful  
 Begins to love us! by a sullen storm, <sup>180</sup>  
 Two months unwearied of severest storm,  
 It put the temper of our minds to proof,  
 And found us faithful through the gloom,  
 and heard

The poet mutter his prelude songs  
 With cheerful heart, an unknown voice of  
 joy

Among the silence of the woods and hills;  
 Silent to any gladness of sound  
 With all their shepherds.

But the gates of Spring  
 Are opened; churlish winter hath given  
 leave

That she should entertain for this one day,  
 Perhaps for many genial days to come, <sup>191</sup>  
 His guests, and make them jocund. — They  
 are pleased,

But most of all the birds that haunt the  
 flood,

With the mild summons; inmates though  
 they be

Of Winter's household, they keep festival  
 This day, who drooped, or seemed to droop,  
 so long;

They show their pleasure, and shall I do  
 less?

Happier of happy though I be, like them  
 I cannot take possession of the sky,  
 Mount with a thoughtless impulse, and  
 wheel there <sup>200</sup>

One of a mighty multitude, whose way  
 Is a perpetual harmony and dance  
 Magnificent. Behold how with a grace  
 Of ceaseless motion, that might scarcely  
 seem

Inferior to angelical, they prolong  
 Their curious pastime, shaping in mid-air,  
 And sometimes with ambitious wing that  
 soars

High as the level of the mountain tops,  
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath, <sup>209</sup>  
 Their own domain; — but ever, while intent  
 On tracing and retracing that large round,  
 Their jubilant activity evolves

Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
 Upwards and downwards; progress intricate  
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
 Their indefatigable flight. 'T is done,

Ten times and more I fancied it had ceased,  
 But lo! the vanished company again  
 Ascending, they approach. I hear their  
 wings <sup>219</sup>

Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound  
 Passed in a moment — and as faint again!  
 They tempt the sun to sport among their  
 plumes;

Tempt the smooth water, or the gleaming  
 ice,

To show them a fair image, — 't is them-  
 selves,

Their own fair forms upon the glimmering  
 plain

Painted more soft and fair as they descend,  
Almost to touch, — then up again aloft,  
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
As if they scorned both resting-place and  
rest!

— This day is a thanksgiving, 't is a day 230  
Of glad emotion and deep quietness;  
Not upon me alone hath been bestowed,  
Me rich in many onward-looking thoughts,  
The penetrating bliss; oh surely these  
Have felt it, not the happy choirs of spring,  
Her own peculiar family of love  
That sport among green leaves, a blither  
train!

But two are missing, two, a lonely pair  
Of milk-white Swans; wherefore are they  
not seen

Partaking this day's pleasure? From afar  
They came, to sojourn here in solitude, 241  
Choosing this Valley, they who had the  
choice

Of the whole world. We saw them day by  
day,

Through those two months of unrelenting  
storm,

Conspicuous at the centre of the Lake  
Their safe retreat, we knew them well, I  
guess

That the whole valley knew them; but to us  
They were more dear than may be well be-  
lieved,

Not only for their beauty, and their still  
And placid way of life, and constant love  
Inseparable, not for these alone, 251  
But that *their* state so much resembled ours,  
They having also chosen this abode;  
They strangers, and we strangers, they a  
pair,

And we a solitary pair like them.  
They should not have departed; many days  
Did I look forth in vain, nor on the wing  
Could see them, nor in that small open  
space

Of blue unfrozen water, where they lodged  
And lived so long in quiet, side by side. 260  
Shall we behold them consecrated friends,  
Faithful companions, yet another year  
Surviving, they for us, and we for them,  
And neither pair be broken? nay perchance  
It is too late already for such hope;  
The Dalesmen may have aimed the deadly  
tube,

And parted them; or haply both are gone  
One death, and that were mercy given to  
both.

Recall, my song, the ungenerous thought;  
forgive,

Thrice favoured Region, the conjecture harsh  
Of such inhospitable penalty 271

Inflicted upon confidence so pure.

Ah! if I wished to follow where the sight  
Of all that is before my eyes, the voice  
Which speaks from a presiding spirit here,  
Would lead me, I should whisper to myself:  
They who are dwellers in this holy place  
Must needs themselves be hallowed, they  
require

No benediction from the stranger's lips,  
For they are blessed already; none would  
give 280

The greeting "peace be with you" unto  
them,

For peace they have; it cannot but be theirs,  
And mercy, and forbearance — nay — not  
these —

*Their* healing offices a pure good-will  
Precludes, and charity beyond the bounds  
Of charity — an overflowing love;  
Not for the creature only, but for all  
That is around them; love for everything  
Which in their happy Region they behold!

Thus do we soothe ourselves, and when  
the thought 290

Is passed, we blame it not for having come.

— What if I floated down a pleasant stream,  
And now am landed, and the motion gone,  
Shall I reprove myself? Ah no, the stream  
Is flowing, and will never cease to flow,  
And I shall float upon that stream again.  
By such forgetfulness the soul becomes,  
Words cannot say how beautiful: then hail,  
Hail to the visible Presence, hail to thee,  
Delightful Valley, habitation fair! 300

And to whatever else of outward form  
Can give an inward help, can purify,  
And elevate, and harmonise, and soothe,  
And steal away, and for a while deceive  
And lap in pleasing rest, and bear us on  
Without desire in full complacency,  
Contemplating perfection absolute,  
And entertained as in a placid sleep.

But not betrayed by tenderness of mind  
That feared, or wholly overlooked the truth,  
Did we come hither, with romantic hope 311  
To find in midst of so much loveliness  
Love, perfect love: of so much majesty  
A like majestic frame of mind in those  
Who here abide, the persons like the place.  
Not from such hope, or aught of such be-  
lief,

Hath issued any portion of the joy  
Which I have felt this day. An awful voice  
'T is true hath in my walks been often heard,  
Sent from the mountains or the sheltered  
fields, 320

Shout after shout — reiterated whoop,  
In manner of a bird that takes delight  
In answering to itself: or like a hound  
Single at chase among the lonely woods,  
His yell repeating; yet it was in truth  
A human voice — a spirit of coming night;  
How solemn when the sky is dark, and earth  
Not dark, nor yet enlightened, but by snow  
Made visible, amid a noise of winds  
And bleatings manifold of mountain sheep,  
Which in that iteration recognise 331  
Their summons, and are gathering round  
for food,

Devoured with keenness, ere to grove or  
bank  
Or rocky bield with patience they retire.

That very voice, which, in some timid  
mood

Of superstitious fancy, might have seemed  
Awful as ever stray demoniac uttered,  
His steps to govern in the wilderness;  
Or as the Norman Curfew's regular beat  
To hearths when first they darkened at the  
knell: 340

That shepherd's voice, it may have reached  
mine ear

Debased and under profanation, made  
The ready organ of articulate sounds  
From ribaldry, impiety, or wrath,  
Issuing when shame hath ceased to check  
the brawls

Of some abused Festivity — so be it.  
I came not dreaming of unruffled life,  
Untainted manners; born among the hills,  
Bred also there, I wanted not a scale  
To regulate my hopes; pleased with the  
good 350

I shrink not from the evil with disgust,  
Or with immoderate pain. I look for Man,  
The common creature of the brotherhood,  
Differing but little from the Man elsewhere,  
For selfishness and envy and revenge,  
Ill neighbourhood — pity that this should  
be —

Flattery and double-dealing, strife and  
wrong.

Yet is it something gained, it is in truth  
A mighty gain, that Labour here preserves  
His rosy face, a servant only here 360  
Of the fireside or of the open field,

A Freeman therefore sound and unimpaired:  
That extreme penury is here unknown,  
And cold and hunger's abject wretchedness  
Mortal to body and the heaven-born mind:  
That they who want are not too great a  
weight

For those who can relieve; here may the  
heart

Breathe in the air of fellow-suffering  
Dreadless, as in a kind of fresher breeze  
Of her own native element, the hand 370  
Be ready and unweary'd without plea,  
From tasks too frequent or beyond its  
power,

For languor or indifference or despair.  
And as these lofty barriers break the force  
Of winds, — this deep Vale, as it doth in  
part

Conceal us from the storm, so here abides  
A power and a protection for the mind,  
Dispensed indeed to other solitudes  
Favoured by noble privilege like this,  
Where kindred independence of estate 380  
Is prevalent, where he who tills the field,  
He, happy man! is master of the field,  
And treads the mountains which his Fathers  
trod.

Not less than halfway up yon mountain's  
side,

Behold a dusky spot, a grove of Firs  
That seems still smaller than it is; this  
grove

Is haunted — by what ghost? a gentle spirit  
Of memory faithful to the call of love;  
For, as reports the Dame, whose fire sends  
up

Yon curling smoke from the grey cot below,  
The trees (her first-born child being then a  
babe) 391

Were planted by her husband and herself,  
That ranging o'er the high and houseless  
ground

Their sheep might neither want from peril-  
ous storm

Of winter, nor from summer's sultry heat,  
A friendly covert; "and they knew it well,"  
Said she, "for thither as the trees grew up  
We to the patient creatures carried food  
In times of heavy snow." She then began  
In fond obedience to her private thoughts  
To speak of her dead husband; is there not  
An art, a music, and a strain of words 402  
That shall be life, the acknowledged voice  
of life,

Shall speak of what is done among the fields,

Done truly there, or felt, of solid good  
And real evil, yet be sweet withal,  
More grateful, more harmonious than the  
breath,

The idle breath of softest pipe attuned  
To pastoral fancies ? Is there such a stream  
Pure and unsullied flowing from the heart  
With motions of true dignity and grace ?  
Or must we seek that stream where Man  
is not ?

Methinks I could repeat in tuneful verse,  
Delicious as the gentlest breeze that sounds  
Through that aerial fir-grove — could pre-  
serve

Some portion of its human history  
As gathered from the Matron's lips, and tell  
Of tears that have been shed at sight of it,  
And moving dialogues between this Pair  
Who in their prime of wedlock, with joint  
hands

Did plant the grove, now flourishing, while  
they

No longer flourish, he entirely gone,  
She withering in her loneliness. Be this  
A task above my skill — the silent mind  
Has her own treasures, and I think of these,  
Love what I see, and honour humankind.

No, we are not alone, we do not stand,  
My sister here misplaced and desolate,  
Loving what no one cares for but ourselves.  
We shall not scatter through the plains and  
rocks

Of this fair Vale, and o'er its spacious  
heights,

Unprofitable kindliness, bestowed  
On objects unaccustomed to the gifts  
Of feeling, which were cheerless and for-  
lorn

But few weeks past, and would be so again  
Were we not here; we do not tend a lamp  
Whose lustre we alone participate,  
Which shines dependent upon us alone,  
Mortal though bright, a dying, dying flame.  
Look where we will, some human hand has  
been

Before us with its offering; not a tree  
Sprinkles these little pastures, but the same  
Hath furnished matter for a thought; per-  
chance

For some one serves as a familiar friend.  
Joy spreads, and sorrow spreads; and this  
whole Vale,

Home of untutored shepherds as it is,  
Swarms with sensation, as with gleams of  
sunshine,

Shadows or breezes, scents or sounds. Nor  
deem

These feelings, though subservient more  
than ours

To every day's demand for daily bread, 450  
And borrowing more their spirit and their  
shape

From self-respecting interests; deem them  
not

Unworthy therefore, and unhallowed — no,  
They lift the animal being, do themselves  
By nature's kind and ever-present aid  
Refine the selfishness from which they  
spring,

Redeem by love the individual sense  
Of anxiousness, with which they are com-  
bined.

And thus it is that fitly they become  
Associates in the joy of purest minds: 460  
They blend therewith congenially: mean-  
while

Calmly they breathe their own undying life  
Through this their mountain sanctuary; long  
Oh long may it remain inviolate,  
Diffusing health and sober cheerfulness,  
And giving to the moments as they pass  
Their little boons of animating thought  
That sweeten labour, make it seen and felt  
To be no arbitrary weight imposed,  
But a glad function natural to man. 470

Fair proof of this, newcomer though I be,  
Already have I gained; the inward frame,  
Though slowly opening, opens every day  
With process not unlike to that which cheers  
A pensive stranger journeying at his leisure  
Through some Helvetian Dell; when low-  
hung mists

Break up and are beginning to recede;  
How pleased he is where thin and thinner  
grows

The veil, or where it parts at once, to spy  
The dark pines thrusting forth their spiky  
heads; 480

To watch the spreading lawns with cattle  
grazed;

Then to be greeted by the scattered huts  
As they shine out; and see the streams whose  
murmur

Had soothed his ear while they were hidden;  
how pleased

To have about him which way e'er he goes  
Something on every side concealed from  
view,

In every quarter something visible  
Half seen or wholly, lost and found again,



Alternate progress and impediment,  
And yet a growing prospect in the main. 490

Such pleasure now is mine, albeit forced,  
Herein less happy than the Traveller,  
To cast from time to time a painful look  
Upon unwelcome things which unawares  
Reveal themselves, not therefore is my heart  
Depressed, nor does it fear what is to come;  
But confident, enriched at every glance,  
The more I see the more delight my mind  
Receives, or by reflection can create:  
Truth justifies herself, and as she dwells  
With Hope, who would not follow where  
she leads? 501

Nor let me pass unheeded other loves  
Where no fear is, and humbler sympathies.  
Already hath sprung up within my heart  
A liking for the small grey horse that bears  
The paralytic man, and for the brute  
In Scripture sanctified — the patient brute  
On which the cripple, in the quarry maimed,  
Rides to and fro: I know them and their  
ways.

The famous sheep-dog, first in all the  
vale, 510

Though yet to me a stranger, will not be  
A stranger long; nor will the blind man's  
guide,

Meek and neglected thing, of no renown!  
Soon will peep forth the primrose, ere it  
fades

Friends shall I have at dawn, blackbird  
and thrush

To rouse me, and a hundred warblers  
more!

And if those Eagles to their ancient hold  
Return, Helvellyn's Eagles! with the Pair  
From my own door I shall be free to claim  
Acquaintance, as they sweep from cloud to  
cloud. 520

The owl that gives the name to Owlet-Crag  
Have I heard whooping, and he soon will  
be

A chosen one of my regards. See there  
The heifer in yon little croft belongs  
To one who holds it dear; with duteous  
care

She reared it, and in speaking of her charge  
I heard her scatter some endearing words  
Domestic, and in spirit motherly,  
She being herself a mother; happy Beast,  
If the caresses of a human voice 530  
Can make it so, and care of human hands.

And ye as happy under Nature's care,  
Strangers to me and all men, or at least

Strangers to all particular amity,  
All intercourse of knowledge or of love  
That parts the individual from his kind.  
Whether in large communities ye keep  
From year to year, not shunning man's  
abode,

A settled residence, or be from far  
Wild creatures, and of many homes, that  
come 540

The gift of winds, and whom the winds  
again

Take from us at your pleasure; yet shall ye  
Not want for this your own subordinate  
place

In my affections. Witness the delight  
With which erewhile I saw that multitude  
Wheel through the sky, and see them now  
at rest,

Yet not at rest upon the glassy lake:

They cannot rest — they gambol like young  
whelps;

Active as lambs, and overcome with joy  
They try all frolic motions; flutter, plunge,  
And beat the passive water with their  
wings. 551

Too distant are they for plain view, but lo!  
Those little fountains, sparkling in the sun,  
Betray their occupation, rising up  
First one and then another silver spout,  
As one or other takes the fit of glee,  
Fountains and spouts, yet somewhat in the  
guise

Of plaything fireworks, that on festal nights  
Sparkle about the feet of wanton boys.

— How vast the compass of this theatre, 560  
Yet nothing to be seen but lovely pomp  
And silent majesty; the birch-tree woods  
Are hung with thousand thousand diamond  
drops

Of melted hoar-frost, every tiny knot  
In the bare twigs, each little budding-place  
Cased with its several beads; what myriads  
these

Upon one tree, while all the distant grove,  
That rises to the summit of the steep,  
Shows like a mountain built of silver light:  
See yonder the same pageant, and again 570  
Behold the universal imagery  
Inverted, all its sun-bright features touched  
As with the varnish and the gloss of  
dreams.

Dreamlike the blending also of the whole  
Harmonious landscape: all along the shore  
The boundary lost — the line invisible  
That parts the image from reality;

And the clear hills, as high as they ascend  
Heavenward, so deep piercing the lake be-  
low.

Admonished of the days of love to come 580  
The raven croaks, and fills the upper air  
With a strange sound of genial harmony;  
And in and all about that playful band,  
Incapable although they be of rest,  
And in their fashion very rioters,  
There is a stillness; and they seem to make  
Calm revelry in that their calm abode.  
Them leaving to their joyous hours I pass,  
Pass with a thought the life of the whole  
year

That is to come: the throng of woodland  
flowers 590

And lilies that will dance upon the waves.

Say boldly then that solitude is not  
Where these things are: he truly is alone,  
He of the multitude whose eyes are doomed  
To hold a vacant commerce day by day  
With Objects wanting life — repelling love;  
He by the vast metropolis immured,  
Where pity shrinks from unremitting calls,  
Where numbers overwhelm humanity,  
And neighbourhood serves rather to divide  
Than to unite — what sighs more deep than  
his, 601

Whose nobler will hath long been sacrificed;  
Who must inhabit under a black sky  
A city, where, if indifference to disgust  
Yield not to scorn or sorrow, living men  
Are oftentimes to their fellow-men no more  
Than to the forest Hermit are the leaves  
That hang aloft in myriads; nay, far less,  
For they protect his walk from sun and  
shower,

Swell his devotion with their voice in  
storms, 610

And whisper while the stars twinkle among  
them

His lullaby. From crowded streets remote,  
Far from the living and dead Wilderness  
Of the thronged world, Society is here  
A true community — a genuine frame  
Of many into one incorporate.

That must be looked for here: paternal  
sway,

One household, under God, for high and  
low,

One family and one mansion; to themselves  
Appropriate, and divided from the world,  
As if it were a cave, a multitude 621  
Human and brute, possessors undisturbed  
Of this Recess — their legislative Hall,

Their Temple, and their glorious Dwelling-  
place.

Dismissing therefore all Arcadian dreams,  
All golden fancies of the golden age,  
The bright array of shadowy thoughts from  
times

That were before all time, or are to be  
Ere time expire, the pageantry that stirs  
Or will be stirring, when our eyes are fixed  
On lovely objects, and we wish to part 631  
With all remembrance of a jarring world,  
— Take we at once this one sufficient hope,  
What need of more? that we shall neither  
droop

Nor pine for want of pleasure in the life  
Scattered about us, nor through want of  
aught

That keeps in health the insatiable mind.  
— That we shall have for knowledge and  
for love

Abundance, and that feeling as we do  
How goodly, how exceeding fair, how pure  
From all reproach is yon ethereal vault, 641  
And this deep Vale, its earthly counterpart,  
By which and under which we are enclosed  
To breathe in peace; we shall moreover find  
(If sound, and what we ought to be our-  
selves,

If rightly we observe and justly weigh)  
The inmates not unworthy of their home,  
The Dwellers of their Dwelling.

And if this  
Were otherwise, we have within ourselves  
Enough to fill the present day with joy, 650  
And overspread the future years with hope,  
Our beautiful and quiet home, enriched  
Already with a stranger whom we love  
Deeply, a stranger of our Father's house,  
A never-resting Pilgrim of the Sea,  
Who finds at last an hour to his content  
Beneath our roof. And others whom we  
love

Will seek us also, Sisters of our hearts,  
And one, like them, a Brother of our hearts,  
Philosopher and Poet, in whose sight 660  
These mountains will rejoice with open joy.  
— Such is our wealth! O Vale of Peace  
we are

And must be, with God's will, a happy  
Band.

Yet 't is not to enjoy that we exist,  
For that end only; something must be done:  
I must not walk in unreprieved delight  
These narrow bounds, and think of nothing  
more,

No duty that looks further, and no care.  
 Each Being has his office, lowly some  
 And common, yet all worthy if fulfilled 670  
 With zeal! acknowledgment that with the  
 gift

Keeps pace a harvest answering to the seed.  
 Of ill-advised Ambition and of Pride  
 I would stand clear, but yet to me I feel  
 That an internal brightness is vouchsafed  
 That must not die, that must not pass  
 away.

Why does this inward lustre fondly seek  
 And gladly blend with outward fellowship?  
 Why do *they* shine around me whom I love?  
 Why do they teach me, whom I thus revere?  
 Strange question, yet it answers not itself.  
 That humble Roof embowered among the  
 trees, 682

That calm fireside, it is not even in them,  
 Blest as they are, to furnish a reply  
 That satisfies and ends in perfect rest.  
 Possessions have I that are solely mine,  
 Something within which yet is shared by  
 none,

Not even the nearest to me and most dear,  
 Something which power and effort may in-  
 part;

I would impart it, I would spread it wide:  
 Immortal in the world which is to come —  
 Forgive me if I add another claim — 692  
 And would not wholly perish even in this,  
 Lie down and be forgotten in the dust,  
 I and the modest Partners of my days  
 Making a silent company in death;  
 Love, knowledge, all my manifold delights,  
 All buried with me without monument  
 Or profit unto any but ourselves!  
 It must not be, if I, divinely taught, 700  
 Be privileged to speak as I have felt  
 Of what in man is human or divine.

While yet an innocent little one, with a  
 heart

That doubtless wanted not its tender moods,  
 I breathed (for this I better recollect)  
 Among wild appetites and blind desires,  
 Motions of savage instinct my delight  
 And exaltation. Nothing at that time  
 So welcome, no temptation half so dear  
 As that which urged me to a daring feat,  
 Deep pools, tall trees, black chasms, and  
 dizzy crags, 711

And tottering towers: I loved to stand and  
 read

Their looks forbidding, read and disobey,  
 Sometimes in act and evermore in thought.

With impulses, that scarcely were by these  
 Surpassed in strength, I heard of danger  
 met

Or quest with courage; enterprise forlorn  
 By one, sole keeper of his own intent,  
 Or by a resolute few, who for the sake  
 Of glory fronted multitudes in arms. 720  
 Yea, to this hour I cannot read a Tale  
 Of two brave vessels matched in deadly  
 fight,

And fighting to the death, but I am pleased  
 More than a wise man ought to be; I wish,  
 Fret, burn, and struggle, and in soul am  
 there.

But me hath Nature tamed, and bade to  
 seek

For other agitations, or be calm;  
 Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent  
 stream,

Some nursing of the mountains which she  
 leads

Through quiet meadows, after he has learnt  
 His strength, and had his triumph and his  
 joy, 731

His desperate course of tumult and of glee.  
 That which in stealth by Nature was per-  
 formed

Hath Reason sanctioned: her deliberate  
 Voice

Hath said; be mild, and cleave to gentle  
 things,

Thy glory and thy happiness be there.  
 Nor fear, though thou confide in me, a want  
 Of aspirations that have been — of foes  
 To wrestle with, and victory to complete,  
 Bounds to be leapt, darkness to be explored;  
 All that inflamed thy infant heart, the love,  
 The longing, the contempt, the undaunted  
 quest, 742

All shall survive, though changed their of-  
 fice, all

Shall live, it is not in their power to die.

Then farewell to the Warrior's Schemes,  
 farewell

The forwardness of soul which looks that  
 way

Upon a less incitement than the Cause  
 Of Liberty endangered, and farewell  
 That other hope, long mine, the hope to fill  
 The heroic trumpet with the Muse's breath!  
 Yet in this peaceful Vale we will not spend  
 Unheard-of days, though loving peaceful  
 thought, 752

A voice shall speak, and what will be the  
 theme?

On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,  
 Musing in solitude, I oft perceive  
 Fair trains of imagery before me rise,  
 Accompanied by feelings of delight  
 Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed;  
 And I am conscious of affecting thoughts  
 And dear remembrances, whose presence  
 soothes 760

Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh  
 The good and evil of our mortal state.  
 — To these emotions, whence soe'er they  
 come,

Whether from breath of outward circum-  
 stance,

Or from the Soul — an impulse to herself —  
 I would give utterance in numerous verse.  
 Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and  
 Hope,

And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith;  
 Of blessed consolations in distress;  
 Of moral strength, and intellectual Power;  
 Of joy in widest commonalty spread; 771  
 Of the individual Mind that keeps her own  
 Inviolate retirement, subject there  
 To Conscience only, and the law supreme  
 Of that Intelligence which governs all —  
 I sing: — “fit audience let me find though  
 few !”

So prayed, more gaining than he asked,  
 the Bard —

In holiest mood. Urania, I shall need  
 Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such  
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven !  
 For I must tread on shadowy ground, must  
 sink 781

Deep — and, aloft ascending, breathe in  
 worlds

To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.  
 All strength — all terror, single or in bands,  
 That ever was put forth in personal form —  
 Jehovah — with his thunder, and the choir  
 Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal  
 thrones —

I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not  
 The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,  
 Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out  
 By help of dreams — can breed such fear  
 and awe 791

As fall upon us often when we look  
 Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man —  
 My haunt, and the main region of my song —  
 — Beauty — a living Presence of the earth,  
 Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms  
 Which craft of delicate Spirits hath com-  
 posed

From earth's materials — waits upon my  
 steps;

Pitches her tents before me as I move,  
 An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves  
 Elysian, Fortunate Fields — like those of  
 old 801

Sought in the Atlantic Main — why should  
 they be

A history only of departed things,  
 Or a mere fiction of what never was ?

For the discerning intellect of Man,  
 When wedded to this goodly universe  
 In love and holy passion, shall find these  
 A simple produce of the common day.

— I, long before the blissful hour arrives,  
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal  
 verse 810

Of this great consummation : — and, by  
 words

Which speak of nothing more than what we  
 are,

Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep  
 Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain  
 To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims  
 How exquisitely the individual Mind  
 (And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
 Of the whole species) to the external World  
 Is fitted: — and how exquisitely, too — 819  
 Thence this but little heard of among men —  
 The external World is fitted to the Mind;  
 And the creation (by no lower name  
 Can it be called) which they with blended  
 night

Accomplish: — this is our high argument.  
 — Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft  
 Must turn elsewhere — to travel near the  
 tribes

And fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed;  
 Must hear Humanity in fields and groves  
 Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang 830  
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
 Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore  
 Within the walls of cities — may these  
 sounds

Have their authentic comment; that even  
 these

Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn ! —  
 Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'st  
 The human Soul of universal earth,  
 Dreaming on things to come; and dost pos-  
 sess

A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
 Of mighty Poets; upon me bestow 840  
 A gift of genuine insight; that my Song

With star-like virtue in its place may shine,  
Shedding benignant influence, and secure  
Itself from all malevolent effect

Of those mutations that extend their sway  
Throughout the nether sphere! — And if  
with this

I mix more lowly matter; with the thing  
Contemplated, describe the mind and Man  
Contemplating; and who, and what he  
was —

The transitory Being that beheld 850  
This Vision; — when and where, and how  
he lived;

Be not this labour useless. If such theme  
May sort with highest objects, then — dread  
Power!

Whose gracious favour is the primal source  
Of all illumination — may my Life  
Express the image of a better time,  
More wise desires, and simpler manners; —  
nurse

My Heart in genuine freedom: — all pure  
thoughts

Be with me; — so shall thy unfailing love  
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the  
end! 860

### THE BROTHERS

1800. 1800

This poem was composed in a grove at the north-eastern end of Grasmere lake, which grove was in a great measure destroyed by turning the high-road along the side of the water. The few trees that are left were spared at my intercession. The poem arose out of the fact, mentioned to me at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the rock called The Pillar, and perished as here described, his staff being left midway on the rock.

“THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us!  
needs must live

A profitable life: some glance along,  
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,  
And they were butterflies to wheel about  
Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,  
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,  
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,  
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,  
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,  
Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn. 10  
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,  
Why can he tarry yonder? — In our church-  
yard

Is neither epitaph nor monument,  
Tombstone nor name — only the turf we  
tread  
And a few natural graves.”

To Jane, his wife,  
Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.  
It was a July evening; and he sate  
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves  
Of his old cottage, — as it chanced, that day,  
Employed in winter's work. Upon the  
stone 20

His wife sate near him, teasing matted  
wool,

While, from the twin cards toothed with  
glittering wire,

He fed the spindle of his youngest child,  
Who, in the open air, with due accord  
Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps  
Her large round wheel was turning. To-  
wards the field

In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,  
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,  
While half an hour went by, the Priest had  
sent

Many a long look of wonder: and at last, 30  
Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white  
ridge

Of carded wool which the old man had piled  
He laid his implements with gentle care,  
Each in the other locked; and, down the  
path

That from his cottage to the church-yard  
led,

He took his way, impatient to accost  
The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering  
there.

“T was one well known to him in former  
days,

A Shepherd-lad; who ere his sixteenth year  
Had left that calling, tempted to entrust 40  
His expectations to the fickle winds  
And perilous waters; with the mariners  
A fellow-mariner; — and so had fared  
Through twenty seasons; but he had been  
reared

Among the mountains, and he in his heart  
Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.  
Often in the piping shrouds had Leonard  
heard

The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds

Of caves and trees:— and, when the regular  
wind

Between the tropics filled the steady sail, 50  
And blew with the same breath through  
days and weeks,

Lengthening invisibly its weary line  
Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours  
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang  
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze;  
And, while the broad blue wave and spar-  
kling foam

Flashed round him images and hues that  
wrought

In union with the employment of his heart,  
He, thus by feverish passion overcome,  
Even with the organs of his bodily eye, 60  
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,  
Saw mountains; saw the forms of sheep  
that grazed

On verdant hills — with dwellings among  
trees,

And shepherds clad in the same country  
grey

Which he himself had worn.

And now, at last,  
From perils manifold, with some small  
wealth

Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,  
To his paternal home he is returned,  
With a determined purpose to resume  
The life he had lived there; both for the  
sake 70

Of many darling pleasures, and the love  
Which to an only brother he has borne  
In all his hardships, since that happy time  
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two  
Were brother-shepherds on their native  
hills.

— They were the last of all their race: and  
now,

When Leonard had approached his home,  
his heart

Failed in him; and, not venturing to enquire  
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,  
He to the solitary churchyard turned; 80  
That, as he knew in what particular spot  
His family were laid, he thence might learn  
If still his Brother lived, or to the file  
Another grave was added. — He had found  
Another grave, — near which a full half-  
hour

He had remained; but, as he gazed, there  
grew

Such a confusion in his memory,  
That he began to doubt; and even to hope

That he had seen this heap of turf before, —  
That it was not another grave; but one 90  
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,  
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked  
Through fields which once had been well  
known to him:

And oh what joy this recollection now  
Sent to his heart! he lifted up his eyes,  
And, looking round, imagined that he saw  
Strange alteration wrought on every side  
Among the woods and fields, and that the  
rocks,

And everlasting hills themselves were  
changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field  
had come, 100

Unseen by Leonard, at the churchyard gate  
Stopped short, — and thence, at leisure,  
limb by limb

Perused him with a gay complacency.

Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,  
"T is one of those who needs must leave the  
path

Of the world's business to go wild alone:  
His arms have a perpetual holiday;  
The happy man will creep about the fields,  
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring  
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles 110  
Into his face, until the setting sun  
Write fool upon his forehead. — Planted  
thus

Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate  
Of this rude churchyard, till the stars ap-  
peared

The good Man might have communed with  
himself,

But that the Stranger, who had left the  
grave,

Approached; he recognised the Priest at  
once,

And, after greetings interchanged, and  
given

By Leonard to the Vicar as to one  
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued. 120

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a  
quiet life:

Your years make up one peaceful family;  
And who would grieve and fret, if, wel-  
come come

And welcome gone, they are so like each  
other,

They cannot be remembered? Scarce a  
funeral

Comes to this churchyard once in eighteen  
months;

And yet, some changes must take place  
among you:

And you, who dwell here, even among these  
rocks,

Can trace the finger of mortality,  
And see, that with our threescore years  
and ten

We are not all that perish. — I remember,<sup>130</sup>  
(For many years ago I passed this road)  
There was a foot-way all along the fields  
By the brook-side — 't is gone — and that  
dark cleft !

To me it does not seem to wear the face  
Which then it had !

*Priest.* Nay, Sir, for aught I know,  
That chasm is much the same —

*Leonard.* But, surely, yonder —

*Priest.* Ay, there, indeed, your memory  
is a friend

That does not play you false. — On that  
tall pike

(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)  
There were two springs which bubbled side  
by side,<sup>141</sup>

As if they had been made that they might  
be

Companions for each other: the huge crag  
Was rent with lightning — one hath dis-  
appeared;

The other, left behind, is flowing still.  
For accidents and changes such as these,  
We want not store of them; — a water-  
spout

Will bring down half a mountain; what a  
feast

For folks that wander up and down like  
you<sup>149</sup>

To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff  
One roaring cataract ! a sharp May-storm  
Will come with loads of January snow,  
And in one night send twenty score of  
sheep

To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies  
By some untoward death among the rocks:  
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a  
bridge;

A wood is felled: — and then for our own  
homes !

A child is born or christened, a field  
ploughed,

A daughter sent to service, a web spun,  
The old house-clock is decked with a new  
face;<sup>160</sup>

And hence, so far from wanting facts or  
dates

To chronicle the time, we all have here  
A pair of diaries, — one serving, Sir,  
For the whole dale, and one for each fire-  
side —

Yours was a stranger's judgment: for  
historians,

Commend me to these valleys !

*Leonard.* Yet your Churchyard  
Seems, if such freedom may be used with  
you,

To say that you are heedless of the past:  
An orphan could not find his mother's  
grave:

Here 's neither head nor foot stone, plate of  
brass,<sup>170</sup>

Cross-bones nor skull, — type of our earthly  
state

Nor emblem of our hopes: the dead man's  
home

Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

*Priest.* Why, there, Sir, is a thought  
that 's new to me !

The stone-cutters, 't is true, might beg their  
bread

If every English churchyard were like ours;  
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth:  
We have no need of names and epitaphs;  
We talk about the dead by our firesides.

And then, for our immortal part ! we want  
No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain  
tale:<sup>181</sup>

The thought of death sits easy on the man  
Who has been born and dies among the  
mountains.

*Leonard.* Your Dalesmen, then, do in  
each other's thoughts

Possess a kind of second life: no doubt

You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves ?

*Priest.* For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what  
I've heard,

Perhaps I might; and, on a winter-evening,  
If you were seated at my chimney's  
nook,<sup>190</sup>

By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange  
round;

Yet all in the broad highway of the world.  
Now there's a grave — your foot is half  
upon it, —

It looks just like the rest; and yet that man  
Died broken-hearted.

*Leonard.* 'T is a common case.  
We 'll take another: who is he that lies

Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?

It touches on that piece of native rock 199  
Left in the church-yard wall.

*Priest.* That's Walter Ewbank.  
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek  
As ever were produced by youth and age  
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.  
Through five long generations had the heart

Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds

Of their inheritance, that single cottage —  
You see it yonder ! and those few green fields.

They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as before  
A little — yet a little, — and old Walter, 210  
They left to him the family heart, and land  
With other burthens than the crop it bore.  
Year after year the old man still kept up  
A cheerful mind, — and buffeted with bond,  
Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,  
And went into his grave before his time.

Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last  
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :

His pace was never that of an old man : 220  
I almost see him tripping down the path  
With his two grandsons after him : — but you,

Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,  
Have far to travel, — and on these rough paths

Even in the longest day of midsummer —  
*Leonard.* But those two Orphans !

*Priest.* Orphans ! — Such they were —  
Yet not while Walter lived : for, though their parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,  
The old man was a father to the boys,  
Two fathers in one father : and if tears, 230  
Shed when he talked of them where they were not,

And hauntings from the infirmity of love,  
Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,

This old Man, in the day of his old age,  
Was half a mother to them. — If you weep, Sir,

To hear a stranger talking about strangers,  
Heaven bless you when you are among your kindred !

Ay — you may turn that way — it is a grave  
Which will bear looking at.

*Leonard.* These boys — I hope  
They loved this good old Man ?

*Priest.* They did — and truly : 240  
But that was what we almost overlooked,  
They were such darlings of each other.

Yes,  
Though from the cradle they had lived with Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though he

Inclined to both by reason of his age,  
With a more fond, familiar, tenderness ;  
They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.

Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,  
Was two years taller : 't was a joy to see,  
To hear, to meet them ! — From their house  
the school 251

Is distant three short miles, and in the time  
Of storm and thaw, when every watercourse  
And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,  
Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,

Would Leonard then, when elder boys remained

At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,

Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,

On windy days, in one of those stray brooks, 260

Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,

Their two books lying both on a dry stone,  
Upon the hither side : and once I said,

As I remember, looking round these rocks  
And hills on which we all of us were born,  
That God who made the great book of the world

Would bless such piety —

*Leonard.* It may be then —  
*Priest.* Never did worthier lads break

English bread :

The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw  
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts, 270  
Could never keep those boys away from church,

Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.

Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner



Among these rocks, and every hollow place  
That venturous foot could reach, to one or  
both

Was known as well as to the flowers that  
grow there.

Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the  
hills;

They played like two young ravens on the  
craggs:

Then they could write, ay and speak too,  
as well

As many of their betters — and for Leonard!

The very night before he went away, <sup>281</sup>

In my own house I put into his hand

A Bible, and I'd wager house and field

That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

*Leonard.* It seems, these Brothers have  
not lived to be

A comfort to each other —

*Priest.* That they might

Live to such end is what both old and young

In this our valley all of us have wished,

And what, for my part, I have often prayed:

But Leonard —

*Leonard.* Then James still is left among  
you! <sup>290</sup>

*Priest.* 'Tis of the elder brother I am  
speaking:

They had an uncle; — he was at that time

A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas:

And, but for that same uncle, to this hour

Leonard had never handled rope or shroud:

For the boy loved the life which we lead  
here;

And though of unripe years, a stripling only,

His soul was knit to this his native soil.

But, as I said, old Walter was too weak

To strive with such a torrent; when he  
died, <sup>300</sup>

The estate and house were sold; and all  
their sheep,

A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,

Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand  
years: —

Well — all was gone, and they were desti-  
tute,

And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,

Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.

Twelve years are past since we had tidings  
from him.

If there were one among us who had heard  
That Leonard Ewbank was come home

again,

From the Great Gavel, down by Leeza's  
banks, <sup>310</sup>

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,  
The day would be a joyous festival;  
And those two bells of ours, which there  
you see —

Hanging in the open air — but, O good Sir!  
This is sad talk — they'll never sound for  
him —

Living or dead. — When last we heard of  
him,

He was in slavery among the Moors  
Upon the Barbary coast. — 'T was not a  
little

That would bring down his spirit; and no  
doubt,

Before it ended in his death, the Youth <sup>320</sup>

Was sadly crossed. — Poor Leonard! when  
we parted,

He took me by the hand, and said to me,  
If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,

To live in peace upon his father's land,

And lay his bones among us.

*Leonard.* If that day

Should come, 't would needs be a glad day  
for him;

He would himself, no doubt, be happy then  
As any that should meet him —

*Priest.* Happy! Sir —

*Leonard.* You said his kindred all were  
in their graves, <sup>329</sup>

And that he had one Brother —

*Priest.* That is but

A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth

James, though not sickly, yet was delicate;

And Leonard being always by his side

Had done so many offices about him,

That, though he was not of a timid nature,

Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy

In him was somewhat checked; and, when  
his Brother

Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,

The little colour that he had was soon

Stolen from his cheek; he drooped, and

pined, and pined — <sup>340</sup>

*Leonard.* But these are all the graves of  
full-grown men!

*Priest.* Ay, Sir, that passed away: we

took him to us;

He was the child of all the dale — he lived

Three months with one, and six months with

another,  
And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor  
love:

And many, many happy days were his.

But, whether blithe or sad, 't is my belief

His absent Brother still was at his heart.

And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found

(A practice till this time unknown to him)  
That often, rising from his bed at night, <sup>351</sup>  
He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping

He sought his brother Leonard. — You are moved !

Forgive me, Sir: before I spoke to you,  
I judged you most unkindly.

*Leonard.* But this Youth,  
How did he die at last ?

*Priest.* One sweet May-morning,  
(It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)

He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,  
With two or three companions, whom their

course  
Of occupation led from height to height <sup>360</sup>  
Under a cloudless sun - - till he, at length,

Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge  
The humour of the moment, lagged behind.

You see yon precipice; — it wears the shape  
Of a vast building made of many crags;

And in the midst is one particular rock  
That rises like a column from the vale,

Whence by our shepherds it is called, THE  
PILLAR.

Upon its airy summit crowned with heath,  
The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,

Lay stretched at ease; but, passing by the  
place <sup>371</sup>

On their return, they found that he was gone.  
No ill was feared; till one of them by chance

Entering, when evening was far spent, the  
house

Which at that time was James's home, there  
learned

That nobody had seen him all that day:  
The morning came, and still he was unheard

of:  
The neighbours were alarmed, and to the  
brook

Some hastened; some ran to the lake: ere  
noon

They found him at the foot of that same  
rock <sup>380</sup>

Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third  
day after

I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !  
*Leonard.* And that then is his grave ! —

Before his death  
You say that he saw many happy years ?

*Priest.* Ay, that he did —

*Leonard.* And all went well with him ? —  
*Priest.* If he had one, the Youth had

twenty homes.  
*Leonard.* And you believe, then, that his  
mind was easy ? —

*Priest.* Yes, long before he died, he found  
that time

Is a true friend to sorrow; and unless  
His thoughts were turned on Leonard's

luckless fortune, <sup>390</sup>  
He talked about him with a cheerful love.

*Leonard.* He could not come to an un-  
hallowed end !

*Priest.* Nay, God forbid ! — You recollect  
I mentioned

A habit which disquietude and grief  
Had brought upon him; and we all con-

jectured  
That, as the day was warm, he had lain  
down

On the soft heath, — and, waiting for his  
comrades,

He there had fallen asleep; that in his sleep  
He to the margin of the precipice

Had walked, and from the summit had  
fallen headlong: <sup>400</sup>

And so no doubt he perished. When the  
Youth

Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we  
think,

His shepherd's staff; for on that Pillar of  
rock

It had been caught mid-way; and there for  
years

It hung; — and mouldered there.  
The Priest here ended —

The Stranger would have thanked him, but  
he felt

A gushing from his heart, that took away  
The power of speech. Both left the spot in

silence;  
And Leonard, when they reached the  
churchyard gate,

As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned  
round, — <sup>410</sup>

And, looking at the grave, he said, " My  
Brother ! "

The Vicar did not hear the words: and now,  
He pointed towards his dwelling-place, en-

treating  
That Leonard would partake his homely  
fare:

The other thanked him with an earnest  
voice;

But added, that, the evening being calm,

He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove  
That overhung the road: he there stopped short,  
And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed

420

All that the Priest had said: his early years  
Were with him: — his long absence, cherished hopes,

And thoughts which had been his an hour before,

All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,

This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed

A place in which he could not bear to live: So he relinquished all his purposes.

He travelled back to Egremont: and thence, That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest, Reminding him of what had passed between them;

430

And adding, with a hope to be forgiven, That it was from the weakness of his heart He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

### MICHAEL

#### A PASTORAL POEM

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as "The Brothers." The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north.

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,

You will suppose that with an upright path  
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent

The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.

But, courage! for around that boisterous brook

The mountains have all opened out themselves,

And made a hidden valley of their own.

No habitation can be seen; but they

Who journey thither find themselves alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,  
and kites

11

That overhead are sailing in the sky.

It is in truth an utter solitude;

Nor should I have made mention of this Dell

But for one object which you might pass by,

Might see and notice not. Beside the brook  
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!

And to that simple object appertains

A story — unenriched with strange events,

Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20

Or for the summer shade. It was the first

Of those domestic tales that spake to me

Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men

Whom I already loved; not verily

For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills

Where was their occupation and abode.

And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy

Careless of books, yet having felt the power

Of Nature, by the gentle agency

Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30

For passions that were not my own, and think

(At random and imperfectly indeed)

On man, the heart of man, and human life.

Therefore, although it be a history

Homely and rude, I will relate the same

For the delight of a few natural hearts;

And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake

Of youthful Poets, who among these hills

Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40

There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;

An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.

His bodily frame had been from youth to age

Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,

Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,

And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt

And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,

Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,  
When others heeded not, He heard the  
South

50

Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
Bethought him, and he to himself would  
say,

"The winds are now devising work for  
me!"

And, truly, at all times, the storm, that  
drives

The traveller to a shelter, summoned him  
Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
That came to him, and left him, on the  
heights.

60

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
And grossly that man errs, who should  
suppose

That the green valleys, and the streams  
and rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's  
thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had  
breathed

The common air; hills, which with vigorous  
step

He had so often climbed; which had im-  
pressed

So many incidents upon his mind

68

Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
Which, like a book, preserved the memory  
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts  
The certainty of honourable gain;  
Those fields, those hills — what could they  
less? had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in single-  
ness.

His Helpmate was a comely matron, old —  
Though younger than himself full twenty  
years.

80

She was a woman of a stirring life,  
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels  
she had

Of antique form; this large, for spinning  
wool;

That small, for flax; and if one wheel had  
rest

It was because the other was at work.

The Pair had but one inmate in their house,

An only Child, who had been born to them  
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began  
To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's  
phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only Son,  
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a  
storm,

91

The one of an inestimable worth,  
Made all their household. I may truly say,  
That they were as a proverb in the vale  
For endless industry. When day was gone,  
And from their occupations out of doors

The Son and Father were come home, even  
then,

Their labour did not cease; unless when all  
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and  
there,

Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed  
milk,

100

Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,  
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet  
when the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was  
named)

And his old Father both betook themselves  
To such convenient work as might employ  
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to  
card

Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair  
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's  
edge,

110

That in our ancient uncouth country style  
With huge and black projection overbrowed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a  
lamp;

An aged utensil, which had performed  
Service beyond all others of its kind.  
Early at evening did it burn — and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which, going by from year to year, had  
found,

And left, the couple neither gay perhaps  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with  
hopes,

121

Living a life of eager industry.  
And now, when Luke had reached his  
eighteenth year,

There by the light of this old lamp they  
sate,

Father and Son, while far into the night  
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,  
Making the cottage through the silent hours

Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.  
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,  
And was a public symbol of the life <sup>130</sup>  
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it  
chanced,

Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north  
and south,

High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,  
And westward to the village near the lake;  
And from this constant light, so regular  
And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
Both old and young, was named THE  
EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of  
years, <sup>140</sup>  
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must  
needs

Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's  
heart

This son of his old age was yet more dear —  
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood  
of all —

Than that a child, more than all other gifts  
That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking  
thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail. <sup>150</sup>  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy! For often-  
times

Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use  
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked  
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind, <sup>161</sup>  
To have the Young-one in his sight, when  
he

Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's  
stool

Sate with a fettered sheep before him  
stretched

Under the large old oak, that near his door  
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of  
shade,

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the  
sun,

Thence in our rustic dialect was called

The CLIPPING TREE, a name which yet it  
bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the  
shade, <sup>170</sup>

With others round them, earnest all and  
blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his  
shouts

Scared them, while they lay still beneath  
the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the  
boy grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years old;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut <sup>180</sup>  
With his own hand a sapling, which he  
hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equip  
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;  
And, to his office prematurely called,  
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
Something between a hindrance and a help;  
And for this cause not always, I believe, <sup>190</sup>  
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;  
Though nought was left undone which  
staff, or voice,

Or looks, or threatening gestures, could  
perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old,  
could stand

Against the mountain blasts; and to the  
heights,

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the Shepherd loved  
before

Were dearer now? that from the Boy there  
came <sup>200</sup>

Feelings and emanations — things which  
were

Light to the sun and music to the wind;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed born  
again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew  
up;

And now, when he had reached his eight-  
eenth year,

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household  
lived  
From day to day, to Michael's ear there  
came

Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
Of an industrious life, and ample means;  
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now  
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,  
A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for  
claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he supposed  
That any old man ever could have lost. 220  
As soon as he had armed himself with  
strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once  
A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,  
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,  
Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
"I have been toiling more than seventy  
years,

And in the open sunshine of God's love 230  
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours  
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think  
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;  
And I have lived to be a fool at last  
To my own family. An evil man  
That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us; and if he were not false,  
There are ten thousand to whom loss like  
this 230

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him; — but  
'T were better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak  
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.

Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;  
He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,  
Another kinsman — he will be our friend  
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
Thriving in trade — and Luke to him shall  
go, 250

And with his kinsman's help and his own  
thrift  
He quickly will repair this loss, and then

He may return to us. If here he stay,  
What can be done? Where every one is  
poor,

What can be gained?" •

At this the old Man paused,  
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
Was busy, looking back into past times.  
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
herself,

He was a parish-boy — at the church-door  
They made a gathering for him, shillings,  
pence 260

And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours  
bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's  
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
Went up to London, found a master there,  
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
To go and overlook his merchandise

Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous  
rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor.

And, at his birth-place, built a chapel,  
floored

With marble which he sent from foreign  
lands. 270

These thoughts, and many others of like  
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
And her face brightened. The old Man  
was glad,

And thus resumed: — "Well, Isabel! this  
scheme

These two days, has been meat and drink  
to me.

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.  
— We have enough — I wish indeed that I  
Were younger; — but this hope is a good  
hope.

— Make ready Luke's best garments, of  
the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him  
forth 280

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:

— If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-  
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields  
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for  
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to pre-  
pare

Things needful for the journey of her son.  
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
To stop her in her work: for, when she  
lay

By Michael's side, she through the last two  
nights

Heard him, how he was troubled in his  
sleep:

And when they rose at morning she could  
see

That all his hopes were gone. That day  
at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by them-  
selves

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not  
go:

We have no other Child but thee to lose —  
None to remember — do not go away,  
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."

The Youth made answer with a jocund  
voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
Recovered heart. That evening her best  
fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work:  
And all the ensuing week the house ap-  
peared

As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length  
The expected letter from their kinsman  
came,

With kind assurances that he would do  
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;  
To which, requests were added, that forth-  
with

He might be sent to him. Ten times or  
more

The letter was read over; Isabel  
Went forth to show it to the neighbours  
round;

Nor was there at that time on English land  
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel  
Had to her house returned, the old Man  
said,

"He shall depart to-morrow." To this  
word

The Housewife answered, talking much of  
things

Which, if at such short notice he should  
go,

Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
To build a Sheepfold; and, before he heard  
The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
For this same purpose he had gathered up  
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's  
edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
With Luke that evening thitherward he  
walked:

And soon as they had reached the place he  
stopped,

And thus the old Man spake to him:—  
"My Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full  
heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
I will relate to thee some little part

Of our two histories; 't will do thee good  
When thou art from me, even if I should  
touch

On things thou canst not know of. —  
After thou

First canst into the world — as oft befalls  
To new-born infants — thou didst sleep  
away

Two days, and blessings from thy Father's  
tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed  
on,

And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside  
First uttering, without words, a natural  
tune;

While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy  
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-  
lowed month,

And in the open fields my life was passed  
And on the mountains; else I think that  
thou

Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke: among  
these hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and  
young

Have played together, nor with me didst  
thou

Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."  
Luke had a manly heart; but at these  
words

He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped  
his hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see  
That these are things of which I need not  
speak. <sup>360</sup>

— Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
A kind and a good Father: and herein  
I but repay a gift which I myself  
Received at others' hands; for, though now  
old

Beyond the common life of man, I still  
Remember them who loved me in my youth.  
Both of them sleep together: here they  
lived,  
As all their Forefathers had done; and  
when

At length their time was come, they were  
not loth

To give their bodies to the family mould.  
I wished that thou should'st live the life  
they lived: <sup>371</sup>

But, 't is a long time to look back, my Son,  
And see so little gain from threescore years.  
These fields were burthened when they  
came to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more  
Than half of my inheritance was mine.  
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my  
work,

And till these three weeks past the land  
was free.

— It looks as if it never could endure  
Another Master. Heaven forgive me,  
Luke, <sup>380</sup>

If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;  
Then, pointing to the stones near which  
they stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:  
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,  
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone —  
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own  
hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both  
may live

To see a better day. At eighty-four  
I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy  
part; <sup>390</sup>

I will do mine. — I will begin again  
With many tasks that were resigned to  
thee:

Up to the heights, and in among the storms,  
Will I without thee go again, and do  
All works which I was wont to do alone,  
Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless  
thee, Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beat-  
ing fast

With many hopes; it should be so — yes —  
yes —

I knew that thou could'st never have a wish  
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound  
to me <sup>400</sup>

Only by links of love: when thou art gone,  
What will be left to us! — But, I forget  
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,  
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,  
When thou art gone away, should evil men  
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
And of this moment; hither turn thy  
thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear  
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou  
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
lived, <sup>410</sup>

Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee  
well —

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt  
see

A work which is not here: a covenant  
'T will be between us; but, whatever fate  
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
And bear thy memory with me to the  
grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke  
stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid  
The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the  
sight <sup>420</sup>

The old Man's grief broke from him; to  
his heart

He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept;  
And to the house together they returned.

— Hushed was that House in peace, or  
seeming peace.

Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn  
the Boy

Began his journey, and when he had reached  
The public way; he put on a bold face;

And all the neighbours, as he passed their  
doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell  
prayers,

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman  
come, <sup>431</sup>

Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy  
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,  
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were  
throughout



"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."  
Both parents read them with rejoicing  
hearts.

So, many months passed on: and once again  
The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and  
now 439

Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour  
He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke  
began

To slacken in his duty; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself  
To evil courses: ignominy and shame  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;  
'T will make a thing endurable, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:  
I have conversed with more than one who  
well 451

Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
He went, and still looked up to sun and  
cloud,

And listened to the wind; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,  
And for the land, his small inheritance. 459  
And to that hollow dell from time to time  
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'T is not forgotten yet  
The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man — and 't is believed by all  
That many and many a day he thither went,  
And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was  
he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,  
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.  
The length of full seven years, from time to  
time, 470

He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,  
And left the work unfinished when he died.  
Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
Survive her Husband: at her death the es-  
tate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.  
The Cottage which was named the EVEN-  
ING STAR

Is gone — the ploughshare has been through  
the ground

On which it stood; great changes have been  
wrought

In all the neighbourhood: — yet the oak is  
left

That grew beside their door; and the re-  
mains 480

Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll.

## THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE

A PASTORAL

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I will only  
add a little monitory anecdote concerning this  
subject. When Coleridge and Southey were  
walking together upon the Fells, Southey  
observed that, if I wished to be considered a  
faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not  
to have said that my Shepherd-boys trimmed  
their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just  
as the words had passed his lips two boys ap-  
peared with the very plant entwined round  
their hats. I have often wondered that Southey,  
who rambled so much about the mountains,  
should have fallen into this mistake, and I re-  
cord it as a warning for others who, with far  
less opportunity than my dear friend had of  
knowing what things are, and far less sagacity,  
give way to presumptuous criticism, from  
which he was free, though in this matter mis-  
taken. In describing a tarn under Helvellyn,  
I say —

"There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer."

This was branded by a critic of these days, in  
a review ascribed to Mrs. Barbauld, as unnatu-  
ral and absurd. I admire the genius of Mrs.  
Barbauld, and am certain that, had her educa-  
tion been favourable to imaginative influences,  
no female of her day would have been more  
likely to sympathise with that image, and to  
acknowledge the truth of the sentiment.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy;  
Among the hills the echoes play  
A never never ending song,  
To welcome in the May.  
The magpie chatters with delight;  
The mountain raven's youngling brood  
Have left the mother and the nest;  
And they go rambling east and west  
In search of their own food;  
Or through the glittering vapours dart 10  
In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,  
Two boys are sitting in the sun;  
Their work, if any work they have,  
Is out of mind — or done.  
On pipes of sycamore they play  
The fragments of a Christmas hymn;  
Or with that plant which in our dale  
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,  
Their rusty hats they trim: 20  
And thus, as happy as the day,  
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge  
The sand-lark chants a joyous song;  
The thrush is busy in the wood,  
And carols loud and strong.  
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,  
All newly born! both earth and sky  
Keep jubilee, and more than all,  
Those boys with their green coronal; 30  
They never hear the cry,  
That plaintive cry! which up the hill  
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,  
"Down to the stump of yon old yew  
We'll for our whistles run a race."  
— Away the shepherds flew;  
They leapt — they ran — and when they  
came

Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,  
Seeing that he should lose the prize, 40  
"Stop!" to his comrade Walter cries —  
James stopped with no good will:  
Said Walter then, exulting; "Here  
You'll find a task for half a year.

"Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross —  
Come on, and tread where I shall tread."  
The other took him at his word,  
And followed as he led.  
It was a spot which you may see  
If ever you to Langdale go; 50  
Into a chasin a mighty block  
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock:  
The gulf is deep below;  
And, in a basin black and small,  
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft  
The challenger pursued his march;  
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained  
The middle of the arch.  
When list! he hears a piteous moan — 60  
Again! — his heart within him dies —

His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,  
He totters, pallid as a ghost,  
And, looking down, espies  
A lamb, that in the pool is pent  
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,  
And safe without a bruise or wound  
The cataract had borne him down  
Into the gulf profound. 70  
His dam had seen him when he fell,  
She saw him down the torrent borne;  
And, while with all a mother's love  
She from the lofty rocks above  
Sent forth a cry forlorn,  
The lamb, still swimming round and round,  
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,  
That sent this rueful cry; I ween  
The Boy recovered heart, and told 80  
The sight which he had seen.  
Both gladly now deferred their task;  
Nor was there wanting other aid —  
A Poet, one who loves the brooks  
Far better than the sages' books,  
By chance had thither strayed;  
And there the helpless lamb he found  
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,  
And brought it forth into the light: 90  
The Shepherds met him with his charge,  
An unexpected sight!  
Into their arms the lamb they took,  
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared;  
Then up the steep ascent they bled,  
And placed him at his mother's side;  
And gently did the Bard  
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,  
And bade them better mind their trade.

## THE PET-LAMB

A PASTORAL

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Barbara  
Lewthwaite, now living at Ambleside (1843),  
though much changed as to beauty, was one of  
two most lovely sisters. Almost the first words  
my poor brother John said, when he visited us  
for the first time at Grasmere, were, "Were  
those two Angels that I have just seen?" and  
from his description I have no doubt they were  
those two sisters. The mother died in childbed;

and one of our neighbours at Grasmere told me that the loveliest sight she had ever seen was that mother as she lay in her coffin with her babe in her arm. I mention this to notice what I cannot but think a salutary custom once universal in these vales. Every attendant on a funeral made it a duty to look at the corpse in the coffin before the lid was closed, which was never done (nor I believe is now) till a minute or two before the corpse was removed. Barbara Lewthwaite was not in fact the child whom I had seen and overheard as described in the poem. I chose the name for reasons implied in the above; and will here add a caution against the use of names of living persons. Within a few months after the publication of this poem, I was much surprised, and more hurt, to find it in a child's school-book which, having been compiled by Lindley Murray, had come into use at Grasmere School where Barbara was a pupil; and, alas! I had the mortification of hearing that she was very vain of being thus distinguished; and, in after-life, she used to say that she remembered the incident and what I said to her upon the occasion.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink;  
I heard a voice; it said, "Drink, pretty creature, drink!"  
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied  
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near; the lamb was all alone,  
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone;  
With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel,  
While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,  
Seemed to feast with head and ears; and his tail with pleasure shook.  
"Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said in such a tone  
That I almost received her heart into my own.

'T was little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare!  
I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.

Now with her empty can the Maiden turned away:

But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked; and from a shady place

I unobserved could see the workings of her face:

If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,

Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might sing: 20

"What ails thee, young One? what? Why pull so at thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? well both for bed and board?

Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be;

Rest, little young One, rest; what is't that aileth thee?

"What is it thou wouldst seek? What is wanting to thy heart?

Thy limbs are they not strong? And beautiful thou art:

This grass is tender grass; these flowers they have no peers;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears!

"If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain; 30

For rain and mountain-storms! the like thou need'st not fear,

The rain and storm are things that scarcely can come here.

"Rest, little young One, rest; thou hast forgot the day

When my father found thee first in places far away;

Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by none,

And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

"He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee home:

A blessed day for thee! then whither wouldst thou roam?

A faithful nurse thou hast; the dam that  
did thee year  
Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could  
have been. 40

"Thou know'st that twice a day I have  
brought thee in this can  
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever  
ran;  
And twice in the day, when the ground is  
wet with dew,  
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk  
it is and new.

"Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout  
as they are now,  
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony  
in the plough;  
My playmate thou shalt be; and when the  
wind is cold  
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall  
be thy fold.

"It will not, will not rest! — Poor creature,  
can it be  
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is work-  
ing so in thee? 50  
Things that I know not of belike to thee are  
dear,  
And dreams of things which thou canst  
neither see nor hear.

"Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green  
and fair!  
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness  
that come there;  
The little brooks that seem all pastime and  
all play,  
When they are angry, roar like lions for  
their prey.

"Here thou need'st not dread the raven in  
the sky;  
Night and day thou art safe, — our cottage  
is hard by.  
Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at  
thy chain?  
Sleep — and at break of day I will come to  
thee again!" 60

— As homeward through the lane I went  
with lazy feet,  
This song to myself did I oftentimes re-  
peat;

And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line  
by line,  
That but half of it was hers, and one half  
of it was mine. 7

Again, and once again, did I repeat the  
song;  
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the  
damsel must belong,  
For she looked with such a look and she  
spake with such a tone,  
That I almost received her heart into my  
own."

## POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES

1800. 1800

### ADVERTISEMENT

By persons resident in the country and at-  
tached to rural objects, many places will be  
found unnamed or of unknown names, where  
little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings  
been experienced, which will have given to  
such places a private and peculiar interest.  
From a wish to give some sort of record to such  
Incidents, and renew the gratification of such  
feelings, Names have been given to Places by  
the Author and some of his Friends, and the  
following Poems written in consequence.

### I

Written at Grasmere. This poem was sug-  
gested on the banks of the brook that runs  
through Easedale, which is, in some parts of  
its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can  
be. I have composed thousands of verses by  
the side of it.

It was an April morning; fresh and clear  
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,  
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the  
voice

Of waters which the winter had supplied  
Was softened down into a vernal tone.  
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,  
And hopes and wishes, from all living things  
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.  
The budding groves seemed eager to urge  
on 9

The steps of June; as if their various hues  
Were only hindrances that stood between  
Them and their object: but, meanwhile,  
prevailed  
Such an entire contentment in the air

That every naked ash, and tardy tree  
 Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance  
 With which it looked on this delightful day  
 Were native to the summer. — Up the brook  
 I roamed in the confusion of my heart,  
 Alive to all things and forgetting all.  
 At length I to a sudden turning came <sup>20</sup>  
 In this continuous glen, where down a rock  
 The Stream, so ardent in its course before,  
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that  
 all  
 Which I till then had heard, appeared the  
 voice  
 Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the  
 lamb,  
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the  
 thrush  
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,  
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the  
 wild growth  
 Or like some natural produce of the air,  
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves  
 were here; <sup>30</sup>  
 But 't was the foliage of the rocks — the  
 birch,  
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green  
 thorn,  
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze:  
 And, on a summit, distant a short space,  
 By any who should look beyond the dell,  
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.  
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,  
 "Our thoughts at least are ours; and this  
 wild nook,  
 My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."  
 — Soon did the spot become my other  
 home, <sup>40</sup>  
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.  
 And, of the Shepherds who have seen me  
 there,  
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk  
 Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,  
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,  
 When they have cause to speak of this wild  
 place,  
 May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

## II

## TO JOANNA

Written at Grasmere. The effect of her  
 laugh is an extravagance; though the effect  
 of the reverberation of voices in some parts  
 of the mountains is very striking. There is, in  
 the "Excursion," an allusion to the bleat of a

lamb thus re-echoed, and described without  
 any exaggeration, as I heard it, on the side of  
 Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches  
 on to Langdale Pikes.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass  
 The time of early youth; and there you  
 learned,  
 From years of quiet industry, to love  
 The living Beings by your own fireside,  
 With such a strong devotion, that your  
 heart  
 Is slow to meet the sympathies of them  
 Who look upon the hills with tenderness,  
 And make dear friendships with the streams  
 and groves.  
 Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,  
 Dwelling retired in our simplicity <sup>10</sup>  
 Among the woods and fields, we love you  
 well,  
 Joanna! and I guess, since you have been  
 So distant from us now for two long years,  
 That you will gladly listen to discourse,  
 However trivial, if you thence be taught  
 That they, with whom you once were happy,  
 talk  
 Familiarly of you and of old times.  
 While I was seated, now some ten days  
 past,  
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop  
 Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-  
 tower, <sup>20</sup>  
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by  
 Came forth to greet me; and when he had  
 asked,  
 "How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted  
 Maid!"  
 And when will she return to us?" he  
 paused;  
 And, after short exchange of village news,  
 He with grave looks demanded, for what  
 cause,  
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,  
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters  
 Of formidable size had chiselled out  
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock,  
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side. <sup>31</sup>  
 — Now, by those dear immunities of heart  
 Engendered between malice and true love,  
 I was not loth to be so catechised,  
 And this was my reply: — "As it befell,  
 One summer morning we had walked abroad  
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.  
 — 'T was that delightful season when the  
 broom,

Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,  
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold. 40  
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks;  
 And when we came in front of that tall rock  
 That eastward looks, I there stopped short  
 — and stood

Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye  
 From base to summit; such delight I found  
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and  
 flower

That intermixture of delicious hues,  
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,  
 In one impression, by connecting force  
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.  
 — When I had gazed perhaps two minutes'

space,

51

Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld  
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed  
 aloud.

The Rock, like something starting from a  
 sleep,

Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed  
 again;

That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag  
 Was ready with her cavern; Haunmar-scar,  
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth  
 A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg  
 heard,

And Fairfield answered with a mountain  
 tone; 60

Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky  
 Carried the Lady's voice, — old Skiddaw  
 blew

His speaking-trumpet; — back out of the  
 clouds

Of Glaramara southward came the voice;  
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty  
 head.

— Now whether (said I to our cordial  
 Friend,

Who in the hey-day of astonishment  
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple  
 truth

A work accomplished by the brotherhood  
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was  
 touched 70

With dreams and visionary impulses  
 To me alone imparted, sure I am  
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.  
 And, while we both were listening, to my  
 side

The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished  
 To shelter from some object of her fear.

— And hence, long afterwards, when eight-  
 een moons

Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone  
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm  
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there,  
 In memory of affections old and true, 81  
 I chiselled out in those rude characters  
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone: —  
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,  
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S  
 Rock."

### III

It is not accurate that the Eminence here al-  
 luded to could be seen from our orchard-seat.  
 It rises above the road by the side of Gras-  
 mere lake, towards Keswick, and its name is  
 Stone-Arthur.

THERE is an Eminence, — of these our  
 hills

The last that parleys with the setting sun;  
 We can behold it from our orchard-seat;  
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk  
 Along the public way, this Peak, so high  
 Above us, and so distant in its height,  
 Is visible; and often seems to send  
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.

The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:  
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large  
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair  
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth  
 The loneliest place we have among the  
 clouds.

And She who dwells with me, whom I have  
 loved

With such communion, that no place on  
 earth

Can ever be a solitude to me,  
 Hath to this lonely Summit given my  
 Name.

### IV

The character of the eastern shore of Gras-  
 mere lake is quite changed, since these verses  
 were written, by the public road being carried  
 along its side. The friends spoken of were  
 Coleridge and my Sister, and the facts oc-  
 curred strictly as recorded.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and  
 crags,

A rude and natural causeway, interposed  
 Between the water and a winding slope  
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern  
 shore

Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy:

And there myself and two beloved Friends,  
One calm September morning, ere the mist  
Had altogether yielded to the sun,  
Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.

— Ill suits the road with one in haste;  
but we<sup>10</sup>  
Played with our time; and, as we strolled  
along,

It was our occupation to observe  
Such objects as the waves had tossed  
ashore —

Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered  
bough,

Each on the other heaped, along the line  
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant  
mood,

Not seldom did we stop to watch some  
tuft

Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,  
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm  
lake,

Suddenly halting now — a lifeless stand !<sup>20</sup>  
And starting off again with freak as sudden;

In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,  
Making report of an invisible breeze

That was its wings, its chariot, and its  
horse,

Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.

— And often, trifling with a privilege  
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,  
And now the other, to point out, perchance  
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too  
fair

Either to be divided from the place<sup>30</sup>  
On which it grew, or to be left alone

To its own beauty. Many such there are,  
Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall  
fern,

So stately, of the queen Osmunda named;  
Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode  
On Grasmere's beach, than Naind by the  
side

Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,  
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.

— So fared we that bright morning: from  
the fields

Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy  
mirth<sup>40</sup>

Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.  
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,  
And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced  
Along the indented shore; when suddenly,  
Through a thin veil of glittering haze was  
seen

Before us, on a point of jutting land,

The tall and upright figure of a Man  
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,  
Angling beside the margin of the lake.

"Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,  
"The Man must be, who thus can lose a  
day<sup>51</sup>

Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's  
hire

Is ample, and some little might be stored  
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."

Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached  
Close to the spot where with his rod and  
line

He stood alone; whereat he turned his  
head

To greet us — and we saw a Man worn  
down

By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken  
cheeks<sup>59</sup>

And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean  
That for my single self I looked at them,

Forgetful of the body they sustained. —  
Too weak to labour in the harvest field,

The Man was using his best skill to gain  
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake

That knew not of his wants. I will not say  
What thoughts immediately were ours, nor  
how

The happy idleness of that sweet morn,  
With all its lovely images, was changed

To serious musing and to self-reproach.<sup>70</sup>  
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves

What need there is to be reserved in speech,  
And temper all our thoughts with charity.

-- Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,  
My Friend, Myself, and She who then re-  
ceived

The same admonishment, have called the  
place

By a memorial name, uncouth indeed  
As e'er by mariner was given to bay

Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast;  
And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name  
it bears.

V

TO M. H.

The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees:  
There was no road, nor any woodman's  
path;

But a thick umbrage — checking the wild  
growth

Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf  
Beneath the branches — of itself had made  
A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,  
And a small bed of water in the woods.

All round this pool both flocks and herds  
might drink

On its firm margin, even as from a well,  
Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's  
hand

Had shaped for their refreshment; nor did  
sun,

Or wind from any quarter, ever come,  
But as a blessing to this calm recess,  
This glade of water and this one green  
field.

The spot was made by Nature for herself;  
The travellers know it not, and 't will re-  
main

Unknown to them; but it is beautiful;  
And if a man should plant his cottage near,  
Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,  
And blend its waters with his daily meal,  
He would so love it, that in his death-hour  
Its image would survive among his thoughts:  
And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still

Nook,  
With all its beeches, we have named from  
You !

### THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE

1800. 1800

Suggested nearer to Grasmere, on the same  
mountain track as that referred to in the fol-  
lowing Note. The Eglantine remained many  
years afterwards, but is now gone.

#### I

"**BEGONE**, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"

Exclaimed an angry Voice,  
"Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self  
Between me and my choice !"

A small Cascade fresh swollen with snows  
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,  
That, all bespattered with his foam,  
And dancing high and dancing low,  
Was living, as a child might know,  
In an unhappy home.

10

#### II

"Dost thou presume my course to block ?  
Off, off ! or, puny Thing !

I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock  
To which thy fibres cling."

The Flood was tyrannous and strong;  
The patient Briar suffered long,  
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,  
Hoping the danger would be past;  
But, seeing no relief, at last,  
He ventured to reply.

20

#### III

"Ah !" said the Briar, "blame me not;  
Why should we dwell in strife ?  
We who in this sequestered spot  
Once lived a happy life !  
You stirred me on my rocky bed —  
What pleasure through my veins you spread  
The summer long, from day to day,  
My leaves you freshened and bedewed;  
Nor was it common gratitude  
That did your cares repay.

30

#### IV

"When spring came on with bud and  
bell,  
Among these rocks did I  
Before you hang my wreaths to tell  
That gentle days were nigh !  
And in the sultry summer hours,  
I sheltered you with leaves and flowers;  
And in my leaves — now shed and gone,  
The linnet lodged, and for us two  
Chanted his pretty songs, when you  
Had little voice or none.

40

#### V

"But now proud thoughts are in your  
breast —  
What grief is mine you see,  
Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest  
Together we might be !  
Though of both leaf and flower bereft,  
Some ornaments to me are left —  
Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,  
With which I, in my humble way,  
Would deck you many a winter day,  
A happy Eglantine !"

50

#### VI

What more he said I cannot tell,  
The Torrent down the rocky dell  
Came thundering loud and fast;  
I listened, nor aught else could hear;  
The Briar quaked — and much I fear  
Those accents were his last.



## THE OAK AND THE BROOM

A PASTORAL

1800. 1800

Suggested upon the mountain pathway that leads from Upper Rydal to Grasmere. The ponderous block of stone which is mentioned in the poem remains, I believe, to this day, a good way up Nab-Scar. Broom grows under it, and in many places on the side of the precipice.

## I

His simple truths did Andrew glean  
Beside the babbling rills;  
A careful student he had been  
Among the woods and hills.  
One winter's night, when through the trees  
The wind was roaring, on his knees  
His youngest born did Andrew hold:  
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,  
Were seated round their blazing fire,  
This Tale the Shepherd told.

## II

"I saw a crag, a lofty stone  
As ever tempest beat!  
Out of its head an Oak had grown,  
A Broom out of its feet.  
The time was March, a cheerful noon —  
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,  
Breathed gently from the warm south-west:  
When, in a voice sedate with age,  
This Oak, a giant and a sage,  
His neighbour thus addressed: —

## III

"Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,  
Along this mountain's edge,  
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,  
Wedge driving after wedge.  
Look up! and think, above your head  
What trouble, surely, will be bred;  
Last night I heard a crash — 't is true,  
The splinters took another road —  
I see them yonder — what a load  
For such a Thing as you!

## IV

"You are preparing as before,  
To deck your slender shape;  
And yet, just three years back — no more —  
You had a strange escape:

Down from you cliff a fragment broke;  
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,  
And hitherward pursued its way;  
This ponderous block was caught by me,  
And o'er your head, as you may see,  
'T is hanging to this day!

## V

"If breeze or bird to this rough steep  
Your kind's first seed did bear;  
The breeze had better been asleep,  
The bird caught in a snare:  
For you and your green twigs decoy  
The little witless shepherd-boy  
To come and slumber in your bower;  
And, trust me, on some sultry noon,  
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon!  
Will perish in one hour.

## VI

"From me this friendly warning take' —  
The Broom began to doze,  
And thus, to keep herself awake,  
Did gently interpose:  
'My thanks for your discourse are due;  
That more than what you say is true,  
I know, and I have known it long;  
Frail is the bond by which we hold  
Our being, whether young or old,  
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

## VII

"Disasters, do the best we can,  
Will reach both great and small;  
And he is oft the wisest man,  
Who is not wise at all.  
For me, why should I wish to roam?  
This spot is my paternal home,  
It is my pleasant heritage;  
My father many a happy year,  
Spread here his careless blossoms, here  
Attained a good old age.

## VIII

"Even such as his may be my lot.  
What cause have I to haunt  
My heart with terrors? Am I not  
In truth a favoured plant!  
On me such bounty Summer pours,  
That I am covered o'er with flowers;  
And, when the Frost is in the sky,  
My branches are so fresh and gay  
That you might look at me and say,  
This Plant can never die.

40

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## IX

“The butterfly, all green and gold,  
To me hath often flown,  
Here in my blossoms to behold  
Wings lovely as his own.  
When grass is chill with rain or dew,  
Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe  
Lies with her infant lamb; I see  
The love they to each other make,  
And the sweet joy which they partake,  
It is a joy to me.” 90

## X

“Her voice was blithe, her heart was light:  
The Broom might have pursued  
Her speech, until the stars of night  
Their journey had renewed;  
But in the branches of the oak  
Two ravens now began to croak  
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air;  
And to her own green bower the breeze  
That instant brought two stripling bees  
To rest, or murmur there.” 100

## XI

“One night, my Children! from the north  
There came a furious blast;  
As break of day I ventured forth,  
And near the cliff I passed.  
The storm had fallen upon the Oak,  
And struck him with a mighty stroke,  
And whirled, and whirled him far away;  
And, in one hospitable cleft,  
The little careless Broom was left  
To live for many a day.” 110

## HART-LEAP WELL

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grassmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage; when, after having tired myself with labouring at an awkward passage in “The Brothers,” I started with a sudden impulse to this to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My Sister and I had past the place a few weeks before in our wild winter journey from Sockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grassmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story so far as concerned the name of the Well, and the Hart, and pointed out the Stones. Both the Stones and the Well are objects that may easily be missed; the tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighbourhood: the man who related it to us was very old.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

## PART FIRST

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley  
Moor

With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,  
And now, as he approached a vassal's door,  
“Bring forth another horse!” he cried  
aloud.

“Another horse!” — That shout the vassal  
heard

And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;  
Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third  
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;  
The horse and horseman are a happy  
pair; 10  
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,  
That as they galloped made the echoes roar;  
But horse and man are vanished, one and  
all;

Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:  
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their  
kind,

Follow, and up the weary mountain strain. 20

The knight hallooed, he cheered and chid  
them on

With suppliant gestures and upbraidings  
stern;

But breath and eyesight fail; and, one by  
one,

The dogs are stretched among the mountain  
fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race?  
The bugles that so joyfully were blown?  
— This chase it looks not like an earthly  
chase;

Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-side;  
 I will not stop to tell how far he fled, <sup>30</sup>  
 Nor will I mention by what death he died;  
 But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn;  
 He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy:  
 He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,  
 But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,  
 Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat;  
 Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeened;  
 And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet. <sup>40</sup>

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched:  
 His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,  
 And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched  
 The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,  
 (Never had living man such joyful lot!)  
 Sir Walter walked all round, north, south,  
 and west,  
 And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill — (it was at least  
 Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found <sup>50</sup>  
 Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast  
 Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now  
 Such sight was never seen by human eyes:  
 Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,  
 Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,  
 And a small harbour, made for rural joy;  
 'T will be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot, <sup>59</sup>  
 A place of love for damsels that are coy.

"A cunning artist will I have to frame  
 A basin for that fountain in the dell!

And they who do make mention of the same,  
 From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

"And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises known,  
 Another monument shall here be raised;  
 Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,  
 And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

"And, in the summer-time when days are long,  
 I will come hither with my Paramour; <sup>70</sup>  
 And with the dancers and the minstrel's song  
 We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains fail  
 My mansion with its harbour shall endure; —  
 The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,  
 And them who dwell among the woods of Ure!"

Then home he went, and left the Hart,  
 stone-dead,  
 With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.  
 — Soon did the Knight perform what he had said; <sup>79</sup>  
 And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,  
 A cup of stone received the living well;  
 Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,  
 And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall  
 With trailing plants and trees were intertwined, —  
 Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,  
 A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,  
 Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour; <sup>90</sup>  
 And with the dancers and the minstrel's song  
 Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of  
time,  
And his bones lie in his paternal vale. —  
But there is matter for a second rhyme,  
And I to this would add another tale.

## PART SECOND

THE moving accident is not my trade;  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:  
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,  
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell  
Three aspens at three corners of a square;  
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine:  
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,  
I saw three pillars standing in a line, —  
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor  
head;  
Half wasted the square mound of tawny  
green;  
So that you just might say, as then I said,  
"Here in old time the hand of man hath  
been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,  
More doleful place did never eye survey;  
It seemed as if the spring-time came not  
here,  
And Nature here were willing to decay. 20

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,  
When one, who was in shepherd's garb  
attired,  
Came up the hollow: — him did I accost,  
And what this place might be I then  
inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story  
told  
Which in my former rhyme I have re-  
hearsed.

"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old!  
But something ails it now: the spot is curst.

"You see these lifeless stumps of aspen  
wood —  
Some say that they are beeches, others  
elms —

30

These were the bower; and here a mansion  
stood,  
The finest palace of a hundred realms!

"The arbour does its own condition tell;  
You see the stones, the fountain, and the  
stream;  
But as to the great Lodge! you might as  
well  
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

"There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor  
sheep,  
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone;  
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep, 39  
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

"Some say that here a murder has been  
done,  
And blood cries out for blood: but, for my  
part,  
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the  
sun,  
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

"What thoughts must through the crea-  
ture's brain have past!  
Even from the topmost stone, upon the  
steep,  
Are but three bounds — and look, Sir, at  
this last —  
O Master! it has been a cruel leap.

"For thirteen hours he ran a desperate  
race;  
And in my simple mind we cannot tell 50  
What cause the Hart might have to love  
this place,  
And come and make his deathbed near the  
well.

"Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,  
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-  
tide;  
This water was perhaps the first he drank  
When he had wandered from his mother's  
side.

"In April here beneath the flowering thorn  
He heard the birds their morning carols  
sing;  
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was  
born  
Not half a furlong from that self-same  
spring.

60

"Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade;

The sun on drearier hollow never shone;  
So will it be, as I have often said,  
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone."

"Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well;  
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine:

This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell;  
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

"The Being, that is in the clouds and air,  
That is in the green leaves among the groves, 70

Maintains a deep and reverential care  
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

"The pleasure-house is dust: — behind,  
before,  
This is no common waste, no common gloom;

But Nature, in due course of time, once more  
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

"She leaves these objects to a slow decay,  
That what we are, and have been, may be known;

But at the coming of the milder day,  
These monuments shall all be overgrown. 80

"One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals;

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

"T IS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE  
DIED FOR LOVE"

1800. 1800

'T is said, that some have died for love:  
And here and there a churchyard grave is found

In the cold north's unhallowed ground,  
Because the wretched man himself had slain,  
His love was such a grievous pain.  
And there is one whom I five years have known;

He dwells alone

Upon Helvellyn's side:

He loved — the pretty Barbara died;

And thus he makes his moan: 10

Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid

When thus his moan he made:

"Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind  
that oak!

Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,

That in some other way yon smoke

May mount into the sky!

The clouds pass on; they from the heavens depart.

I look — the sky is empty space;

I know not what I trace;

But when I cease to look, my hand is on  
my heart. 20

"Oh! what a weight is in these shades!  
Ye leaves,

That murmur once so dear, when will it  
cease?

Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,

It robs my heart of peace.

Thou Thrush, that singest loud — and loud  
and free,

Into yon row of willows flit,

Upon that alder sit;

Or sing another song, or choose another  
tree.

"Roll back, sweet Rill! back to thy  
mountain-bounds,

And there for ever be thy waters chained!

For thou dost haunt the air with sounds 30

That cannot be sustained;

If still beneath that pine-tree's rugged  
bough

Headlong yon waterfall must come,

Oh let it then be dumb!

Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which  
thou art now.

"Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny  
showers,

Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,

Thou one fair shrub, oh! shed thy flowers,  
And stir not in the gale. 40

For thus to see thee nodding in the air,

To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,

Thus rise and thus descend, —

Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can  
bear."

The Man who makes this feverish complaint  
Is one of giant stature, who could dance  
Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.  
Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine  
To store up kindred hours for me, thy face  
Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me  
walk<sup>50</sup>  
Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor  
know  
Such happiness as I have known to-day.

## THE CHILDLESS FATHER

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. When I  
was a child at Cockermouth, no funeral took  
place without a basin filled with sprigs of box-  
wood being placed upon a table covered with  
a white cloth in front of the house. The hunt-  
ings on foot, in which the old man is supposed  
to join as here described, were of common, al-  
most habitual, occurrence in our vales when I  
was a boy; and the people took much delight in  
them. They are now less frequent.

"Up, Timothy, up with your staff and away !  
Not a soul in the village this morning will  
stay;  
The hare has just started from Hamilton's  
grounds,  
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the  
hounds."

— Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and  
green,  
On the slopes of the pastures all colours  
were seen;  
With their comely blue aprons, and caps  
white as snow,  
The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six  
months before,  
Filled the funeral basin at Timothy's door;  
A coffin through Timothy's threshold had  
past;  
One Child did it bear, and that Child was  
his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the  
fray,  
The horse and the horn, and the hark !  
hark away !  
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut  
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said;  
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead."  
But of this in my ears not a word did he  
speak;  
And he went to the chase with a tear on his  
cheek.

## SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW

1800. 1800

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains  
Roar down many a craggy steep,  
Yet they find among the mountains  
Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,  
Ere the storm its fury stills,  
Helmet-like themselves will fasten  
On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre  
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,  
Yet he has a home to enter  
In some nook of chosen ground:

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean  
Yield him no domestic cave,  
Slumbers without sense of motion,  
Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less she loves her haven  
In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,  
Vagrant over desert sands,  
Brooding on her eggs reposes  
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,  
Never nearer to the goal;  
Night and day, I feel the trouble  
Of the Wanderer in my soul.

## RURAL ARCHITECTURE

1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. These  
structures, as every one knows, are common  
amongst our hills, being built by shepherds, as  
conspicuous marks, and occasionally by boys in  
sport.

THERE's George Fisher, Charles Fleming,  
and Reginald Shore,  
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest  
not more  
Than the height of a counsellor's bag;  
To the top of GREAT HOW did it please  
them to climb:  
And there they built up, without mortar or  
lime,  
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as  
they lay:  
They built him and christened him all in  
one day,  
An urchin both vigorous and hale;  
And so without scruple they called him  
Ralph Jones.  
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of  
his bones;  
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,  
And, in anger or merriment, out of the north,  
Coming on with a terrible pother,  
From the peak of the crag blew the giant  
away.  
And what did these school-boys? — The  
very next day  
They went and they built up another.

— Some little I've seen of blind boisterous  
works  
By Christian disturbers more savage than  
Turks,  
Spirits busy to do and undo:  
At remembrance whereof my blood some-  
times will flag;  
Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the  
crag!  
And I'll build up a giant with you.

### ELLEN IRWIN

#### OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLE

1800. 1800

It may be worth while to observe that as  
there are Scotch Poems on this subject in  
simple ballad strain, I thought it would be  
both presumptuous and superfluous to attempt  
treating it in the same way; and, accordingly,  
I chose a construction of stanza quite new in  
our language; in fact, the same as that of  
Bürger's *Leonora*, except that the first and

third lines do not, in my stanzas, rhyme. At  
the outset I threw out a classical image to pre-  
pare the reader for the style in which I meant  
to treat the story, and so to preclude all com-  
parison.

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate  
Upon the braes of Kirtle,  
Was lovely as a Grecian maid  
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle;  
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,  
And there did they beguile the day  
With love and gentle speeches,  
Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires  
The Bruce had been selected;  
And Gordon, fairest of them all,  
By Ellen was rejected. 10  
Sad tidings to that noble Youth!  
For it may be proclaimed with truth,  
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,  
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,  
His shattered hopes and crosses,  
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,  
Reclined on flowers and mosses? 20  
Alas that ever he was born!  
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,  
Sees them and their caressing;  
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts  
That through his brain are travelling,  
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce  
He launched a deadly javelin!  
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,  
And, starting up to meet the same, 30  
Did with her body cover  
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,  
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,  
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,  
The mortal spear repelling.  
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain  
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain;  
And fought with rage incessant  
Against the Moorish crescent. 40

But many days, and many months,  
And many years ensuing,  
This wretched Knight did vainly seek  
The death that he was wooing.

So, coming his last help to crave,  
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave  
His body he extended,  
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard  
The tale I have been telling,  
May in Kirkeconnel churchyard view  
The grave of lovely Ellen:  
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid;  
And, for the stone upon his head,  
May no rude hand deface it,  
And its forlorn *Quoth* tacer!

## ANDREW JONES

1800. 1800

I HATE that Andrew Jones; he'll breed  
His children up to waste and pillage.  
I wish the press-gang or the drum  
With its tantara sound would come,  
And sweep him from the village!

I said not this, because he loves  
Through the long day to swear and tittle;  
But for the poor dear sake of one  
To whom a foul deed he had done,  
A friendless man, a travelling cripple!

For this poor crawling helpless wretch,  
Some horseman who was passing by,  
A penny on the ground had thrown;  
But the poor cripple was alone  
And could not stoop — no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground  
For it had long been droughty weather;  
So with his staff the cripple wrought  
Among the dust till he had brought  
The half-pennies together.

It chanced that Andrew passed that way  
Just at the time; and there he found  
The cripple in the mid-day heat  
Standing alone, and at his feet  
He saw the penny on the ground.

He stopped and took the penny up:  
And when the cripple nearer drew,  
Quoth Andrew, "Under half-a-crown,  
What a man finds is all his own,  
And so, my Friend, good-day to you."

And hence I said, that Andrew's boys  
Will all be trained to waste and pillage;  
And wished the press-gang, or the drum  
With its tantara sound, would come  
And sweep him from the village.

## THE TWO THIEVES

OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE

1800. 1800

This is described from the life, as I was in  
the habit of observing when a boy at Hawks-  
head School. Daniel was more than eighty  
years older than myself when he was daily,  
thus occupied, under my notice. No book  
could have so early taught me to think of the  
changes to which human life is subject; and  
while looking at him I could not but say to  
myself — we may, one of us, I or the happiest  
of my playmates, live to become still more the  
object of pity than this old man, this half-deat-  
ing pilferer!

O now that the genius of Bewick were mine,  
And the skill which he learned on the banks  
of the Tyne.

Then the Muses might deal with me just as  
they chose,  
For I'd take my last leave both of verse  
and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical  
hand!

Book-learning and books should be banished  
the land:

And, for hunger and thirst and such trouble-  
some calls,

Every ale-house should then have a feast  
on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes  
on a chair;

Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw  
would he care!

For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and  
his sheaves,

Oh, what would they be to my tale of two  
Thieves?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three birth-  
days old,

His Grandsire that age more than thirty  
times told;



There are ninety good seasons of fair and  
foul weather  
Between them, and both go a-pilfering  
together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his  
floor?  
Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's  
door?

Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will  
slide!

And his Grandson's as busy at work by his  
side. 20

Old Daniel begins; he stops short — and  
his eye,  
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning  
and sly:

'T is a look which at this time is hardly his  
own,  
But tells a plain tale of the days that are  
flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by  
the wires  
Of manifold pleasures and many desires:  
And what if he cherished his purse? 'T was  
no more  
Than treading a path trod by thousands  
before.

'T was a path trod by thousands; but Daniel  
is one  
Who went something farther than others  
have gone, 30  
And now with old Daniel you see how it  
fares;  
You see to what end he has brought his  
grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand: ere the  
sun  
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is  
begun:  
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,  
This child but half knows it, and that, not  
at all.

They hunt through the streets with delib-  
erate tread,  
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led;  
And, wherever they carry their plots and  
their wiles,  
Every face in the village is dimpled with  
smiles. 40

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy  
they roam;

For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter at  
home,

Who will gladly repair all the damage  
that's done;

And three, were it asked, would be ren-  
dered for one.

Old Man! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,  
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy  
side:

Long yet may'st thou live! for a teacher we  
see

That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

## A CHARACTER

1800. 1800

The principal features are taken from that  
of my friend Robert Jones.

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space  
For so many strange contrasts in one human  
face:

There's thought and no thought, and there's  
paleness and bloom

And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and  
gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both re-  
dundant and vain;

Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain  
Could pierce through a temper that's soft to  
disease,

Would be rational peace — a philosopher's  
ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails or  
succeeds,

And attention full ten times as much as  
there needs;

Pride where there's no envy, there's so  
much of joy;

And mildness, and spirit both forward and  
coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident  
stare

Of shame scarcely seeming to know that  
she's there,

There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,  
Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy  
the name.

This picture from nature may seem to de-  
part,  
Yet the Man would at once run away with  
your heart;  
And I for five centuries right gladly would  
be  
Such an odd, such a kind happy creature as  
he.

## INSCRIPTIONS

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE  
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND,  
DERWENTWATER

1800. 1800

If thou in the dear love of some one Friend  
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what  
thoughts

Will sometimes in the happiness of love  
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou rever-  
ence

This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not un-  
moved

Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of  
stones,

The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.  
Here stood his threshold; here was spread  
the roof

That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,  
After long exercise in social cares  
And offices humane, intent to adore  
The Deity, with undistracted mind,  
And meditate on everlasting things,  
In utter solitude. — But he had left  
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man  
loved

As his own soul. And, when with eye up-  
raised

To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,  
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore  
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced  
Along the beach of this small isle and  
thought

Of his Companion, he would pray that both  
(Now that their earthly duties were ful-  
filled)

Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain  
So prayed he: — as our chronicles report,  
Though here the Hermit numbered his last  
day

Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,  
Those holy Men both died in the same  
hour.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE  
IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-  
HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE

1800. 1800

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen  
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained  
Proportions more harmonious, and ap-  
proached

To closer fellowship with ideal grace.

But take it in good part: — alas! the poor

Vitruvius of our village had no help

From the great City; never, upon leaves

Of red Morocco folio, saw displayed,

In long succession, pre-existing ghosts

Of Beauties yet unborn — the rustic Lodge

Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,

Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,

(Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined  
hermitage.

Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these walls  
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and  
here

The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from  
the wind.

And hither does one Poet sometimes row

His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled

With plenteous store of heath and withered  
fern,

(A lading which he with his sickle cuts, 20  
Among the mountains) and beneath this roof  
He makes his summer couch, and here at  
noon

Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,  
the Sheep,

Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,

Lie round him, even as if they were a part  
Of his own Household: nor, while from  
his bed

He looks, through the open door-place,  
toward the lake

And to the stirring breezes, does he want

Creations lovely as the work of sleep —

Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy! 30

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A  
STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP  
LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY,  
UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL

1800. 1800

STRANGER! this hillock of mis-shapen  
stones

Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,

Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the  
Cairn  
Of some old British Chief: 't is nothing  
more  
Than the rude embryo of a little Dome  
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be  
built

Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.  
But, as it chanced, Sir William having  
learned

That from the shore a full-grown man  
might wade,

And make himself a freeman of this spot  
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight  
Desisted, and the quarry and the mound  
Are monuments of his unfinished task.  
The block on which these lines are traced,  
perhaps,

Was once selected as the corner-stone  
Of that intended Pile, which would have  
been

Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate  
skill,

So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,  
And other little builders who dwell here,  
Had wondered at the work. But blame  
him not,

For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,  
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained  
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,  
And for the outrage which he had devised  
Entire forgiveness! — But if thou art one  
On fire with thy impatience to become  
An inmate of these mountains, — if, dis-  
turbed

By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn  
Out of the quiet rock the elements  
Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze  
In snow-white splendour, — think again;  
and, taught

By old Sir William and his quarry, leave  
Thy fragments to the bramble and the  
rose;

There let the vernal slow-worm sun him-  
self,

And let the redbreast hop from stone to  
stone.

### THE SPARROW'S NEST

1801. 1807

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Gras-  
mere. At the end of the garden of my father's  
house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that

commanded a fine view of the river Derwent  
and Cockermouth Castle. This was our favour-  
ite play-ground. The terrace-wall, a low one,  
was covered with closely-clipt privet and roses,  
which gave an almost impervious shelter to  
birds that built their nests there. The latter  
of these stanzas alludes to one of those nests.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
On me the chance-discovered sight  
Gleaned like a vision of delight.  
I started — seeming to espy  
The home and sheltered bed,  
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
My Father's house, in wet or dry  
My sister Emmeline and I  
Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;  
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:  
Such heart was in her, being then  
A little Prattler among men.  
The Blessing of my later years  
Was with me when a boy:  
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
And love, and thought, and joy.

### "PELION AND OSSA FLOURISH SIDE BY SIDE"

1801. 1815

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,  
Together in immortal books enrolled:  
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold;  
And that inspiring Hill, which "did di-  
vide

Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"  
Shines with poetic radiance as of old;  
While not an English Mountain we be-  
hold

By the celestial Muses glorified.  
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in  
crowds:

What was the great Parnassus' self to  
Thee,

Mount Skiddaw? In his natural sover-  
eignty

Our British Hill is nobler far; he shrouds  
His double front among Atlantic clouds,  
And pours forth streams more sweet than  
Castaly.

## THE PRIORESS'S TALE

FROM CHAUCER

1801. 1820

"Call up him who left half told  
The story of Cambuscan bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *also* and *alway*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine background for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

## I

"O LORD, our Lord! how wondrously,"  
(quoth she)  
"Thy name in this large world is spread  
abroad!  
For not alone by men of dignity  
Thy worship is performed and precious  
laud;  
But by the mouths of children, gracious  
God!  
Thy goodness is set forth; they when they  
lie  
Upon the breast thy name do glorify."

## II

"Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I  
may,  
Jesu! of thee, and the white Lily-flower  
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for  
aye,  
To tell a story I will use my power;  
Not that I may increase her honour's  
dower,  
For she herself is honour, and the root  
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best  
boot."

## III

"O Mother Maid! O Maid and Mother  
free!  
O bush unburnt! burning in Moses' sight!

That down didst ravish from the Deity,  
Through humbleness, the spirit that did  
alight  
Upon thy heart, whence, through that  
glory's might,  
Conceived was the Father's sapience,  
Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

## IV

"Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,  
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,  
Surpass all science and all utterance;  
For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to thee  
Thou goest before in thy benignity,  
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,  
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear."

## V

"My knowledge is so weak, O blissful  
Queen!  
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,  
That I the weight of it may not sustain;  
But as a child of twelvemonths old or less,  
That laboureth his language to express,  
Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee pray,  
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall  
say."

## VI

"There was in Asia, in a mighty town,  
'Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews  
might be,  
Assigned to them and given them for their  
own  
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,  
Hateful to Christ and to his company;  
And through this street who list might ride  
and wend;  
Free was it, and unbarred at either end."

## VII

"A little school of Christian people stood  
Down at the farther end, in which there  
were  
A nest of children come of Christian blood,  
That learned in that school from year to  
year  
Such sort of doctrine as men used there,  
That is to say, to sing and read also,  
As little children in their childhood do."

## VIII

"Among these children was a Widow's  
son,  
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,

Who day by day unto this school hath gone,  
And eke, when he the image did behold  
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,  
This Child was wont to kneel adown and  
say  
*Ave Marie*, as he goeth by the way.

## IX

"This Widow thus her little Son hath taught  
Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,  
To worship aye, and he forgat it not;  
For simple infant hath a ready ear. 60  
Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,  
Calling to mind this matter when I may,  
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth  
aye,  
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

## X

"This little Child, while in the school he  
sate  
His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,  
The whilst the rest their anthem-book re-  
peat  
The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear;  
And as he durst he drew him near and near,  
And hearkened to the words and to the  
note, 70  
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

## XI

"This Latin knew he nothing what it said,  
For he too tender was of age to know;  
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed  
That he the meaning of this song would  
show,  
And unto him declare why men sing so;  
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,  
This child did him beseech on his bare  
knees.

## XII

"His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,  
Answered him thus: — 'This song, I have  
heard say, 80  
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;  
Her to salute, and also her to pray  
To be our help upon our dying day:  
If there is more in this, I know it not;  
Song do I learn, — small grammar I have  
got.'

## XIII

"And is this song fashioned in reverence  
Of Jesu's Mother?' said this Innocent;

'Now, certès, I will use my diligence  
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent;  
Although I for my Primer shall be shent, 90  
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,  
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.'

## XIV

"His Schoolfellow, whom he had so be-  
sought,  
As they went homeward taught him privily,  
And then he sang it well and fearlessly,  
From word to word according to the note:  
Twice in a day it passed through his throat;  
Homeward and schoolward whensoever he  
went,  
On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

## XV

"Through all the Jewry (this before said  
I) 100  
This little Child, as he came to and fro,  
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,  
O *Alma Redemptoris*! high and low:  
The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced so  
His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray,  
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

## XVI

"The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath  
His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled  
— 'O woe,  
O Hebrew people!' said he in his wrath,  
'Is it an honest thing? Shall this be so? 110  
That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go  
In your despite, and sing his hymns and  
saws,  
Which is against the reverence of our laws!'

## XVII

"From that day forward have the Jews con-  
spired  
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;  
And to this end a Homicide they hired,  
That in an alley had a privy place,  
And, as the Child 'gan to the school to pace,  
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast  
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast. 120

## XVIII

"I say that him into a pit they threw,  
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents  
exhale;  
O cursèd folk! away, ye Herods new!  
What may your ill intentions you avail?  
Murder will out; certès it will not fail;

Know, that the honour of high God may  
spread,  
The blood cries out on your accursèd deed.

## XIX

"O Martyr 'stablished in virginity!  
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the  
throne,<sup>129</sup>  
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,  
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,  
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go  
Before the Lamb singing continually,  
That never fleshly woman they did know.

## XX

"Now this poor widow waiteth all that  
night  
After her little Child, and he came not;  
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning  
light,  
With face all pale with dread and busy  
thought,  
She at the School and elsewhere him hath  
sought  
Until thus far she learned, that he had  
been<sup>140</sup>  
In the Jews' street, and there he last was  
seen.

## XXI

"With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed  
She goeth, as she were half out of her  
mind,  
To every place wherein she hath supposed  
By likelihood her little Son to find;  
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind  
She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,  
And him among the accursèd Jews she  
sought.

## XXII

"She asketh, and she piteously doth pray  
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place,<sup>150</sup>  
To tell her if her child had passed that  
way;  
They all said — Nay; but Jesu of his grace  
Gave to her thought, that in a little space  
She for her Son in that same spot did cry  
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

## XXIII

"O thou great God that dost perform thy  
laud  
By mouths of Innocents, lo! here thy  
might;

This gem of chastity, this emerald,  
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,  
There, where with mangled throat he lay  
upright,<sup>160</sup>  
The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing,  
So loud, that with his voice the place did  
ring.

## XXIV

"The Christian folk that through the Jewry  
went  
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;  
And hastily they for the Provost sent;  
Immediately he came, not tarrying,  
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly  
King,  
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind:  
Which done he bade that they the Jews  
should bind.

## XXV

"This Child with piteous lamentation then  
Was taken up, singing his song alway;<sup>171</sup>  
And with procession great and pomp of  
men  
To the next Abbey him they bare away;  
His Mother swooning by the body lay:  
And scarcely could the people that were  
near  
Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

## XXVI

"Torment and shameful death to every  
one  
This Provost doth for those bad Jews pre-  
pare  
That of this murder wist, and that anon:  
Such wickedness his judgments cannot  
spare;<sup>180</sup>  
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;  
Them therefore with wild horses did he  
draw,  
And after that he hung them by the law.

## XXVII

"Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie  
Before the altar while the Mass doth last:  
The Abbot with his convent's company  
Then sped themselves to bury him full  
fast;  
And, when they holy water on him cast,  
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was  
the water,  
And sang, O *Alma Redemptoris Mater*!<sup>190</sup>

## XXVIII

"This Abbot, for he was a holy man,  
As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,  
In supplication to the Child began  
Thus saying, 'O dear Child! I summon  
thee  
In virtue of the holy Trinity  
Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this  
hymn  
Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth  
seem.'

## XXIX

"My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'  
Said this young Child, 'and by the law of  
kind  
I should have died, yea many hours ago; 200  
But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,  
Will that his glory last, and be in mind;  
And, for the worship of his Mother dear,  
Yet may I sing O *Alma*! loud and clear.

## XXX

"This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,  
After my knowledge I have loved alway;  
And in the hour when I my death did  
meet  
To me she came, and thus to me did say,  
"Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay." 209  
As ye have heard; and soon as I had sung  
Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

## XXXI

"Wherefore I sing, nor can from song re-  
frain,  
In honour of that blissful Maiden free,  
Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain;  
And after that thus said she unto me;  
"My little Child, then will I come for thee  
Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they  
take:  
Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake!"

## XXXII

"This holy Monk, this Abbot — him mean  
I,  
Touched then his tongue, and took away  
the grain; 220  
And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;  
And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,  
His salt tears trickled down like showers of  
rain;  
And on his face he dropped upon the  
ground,  
And still he lay as if he had been bound.

## XXXIII

"Eke the whole Convent on the pavement  
lay,  
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;  
And after that they rose, and took their  
way,  
And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,  
And in a tomb of precious marble clear 230  
Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet. —  
Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

## XXXIV

"Young Hlew of Lincoln! in like sort laid  
low  
By cursèd Jews — thing well and widely  
known,  
For it was done a little while ago —  
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry  
Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying  
eye,  
In mercy would his mercy multiply  
On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary!"

THE CUCKOO AND THE  
NIGHTINGALE

FROM CHAUCER

1801. 1842

## I

THE God of Love — *ah, benedicite!*  
How mighty, and how great a Lord is he!  
For he of low hearts can make high, of  
high  
He can make low, and unto death bring  
nigh;  
And hard hearts he can make them kind  
and free.

## II

Within a little time, as hath been found,  
He can make sick folk whole and fresh and  
sound:  
Them who are whole in body and in mind,  
He can make sick, — bind can he and un-  
bind  
All that he will have bound, or have un-  
bound. 10

## III

To tell his might my wit may not suffice;  
Foolish men he can make them out of  
wise; —  
For he may do all that he will devise;

Loose livers he can make abate their vice,  
And proud hearts can make tremble in a  
trice.

## IV

In brief, the whole of what he will, he may;  
Against him dare not any wight say nay;  
To humble or afflict whome'er he will,  
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill;  
But most his might he sheds on the eve of  
May. 20

## V

For every true heart, gentle heart and free,  
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,  
Now against May shall have some stirring  
— whether  
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never  
At other time, methinks, in like degree.

## VI

For now when they may hear the small  
birds' song,  
And see the budding leaves the branches  
throug,  
This unto their remembrance doth bring  
All kinds of pleasure mixed with sorrowing;  
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever  
long. 30

## VII

And of that longing heaviness doth come,  
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart  
and home:  
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;  
And thus in May their hearts are set on fire,  
So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

## VIII

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though  
now  
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;  
Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,  
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every  
day, —  
How hard, alas ! to bear, I only know. 40

## IX

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep  
Through all this May that I have little  
sleep;  
And also 't is not likely unto me,  
That any living heart should sleepy be  
In which Love's dart its fiery point doth  
steep.

## X

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,  
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;  
How among them it was a common tale,  
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,  
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be uttered. 50

## XI

And then I thought anon as it was day,  
I gladly would go somewhere to essay  
If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,  
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,  
And it was then the third night of the  
May.

## XII

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,  
No longer would I in my bed abide,  
But straightway to a wood that was hard  
by,  
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,  
And held the pathway down by a brook-  
side; 60

## XIII

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,  
I in so fair a one had never been.  
The ground was green, with daisy powdered  
over;  
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty  
cover,  
All green and white; and nothing else was  
seen.

## XIV

There sate I down among the fair fresh  
flowers,  
And saw the birds come tripping from their  
bowers,  
Where they had rested them all night; and  
they,  
Who were so joyful at the light of day, 69  
Began to honour May with all their powers.

## XV

Well did they know that service all by  
rote,  
And there was many and many a lovely  
note,  
Some, singing loud, as if they had com-  
plained;  
Some with their notes another manner  
feigned;  
And some did sing all out with the full  
throat.



## XVI

They pruned themselves, and made themselves right gay,  
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;  
And ever two and two together were,  
The same as they had chosen for the year,  
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day. 80

## XVII

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate upon,  
Was making such a noise as it ran on  
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;  
Methought that it was the best melody  
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

## XVIII

And for delight, but how I never wot,  
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,  
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;  
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,  
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought. 90

## XIX

And that was right upon a tree fast by,  
And who was then ill satisfied but I?  
Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the rood,  
From thee and thy base throat, keep all that's good,  
Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

## XX

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,  
In the next bush that was me fast beside,  
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,  
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,  
Echoing thorough all the green wood wide. 100

## XXI

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my heart's cheer,  
Hence hast thou stayed a little while too long;  
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,  
And she hath been before thee with her song;  
Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

## XXII

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I pray;  
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,

Methought I wist right well what these birds meant,  
And had good knowing both of their intent,  
And of their speech, and all that they would say. 110

## XXIII

The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake:—  
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or brake,  
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell here;  
For every wight eschews thy song to hear,  
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

## XXIV

What! quoth she then, what is't that ails thee now?  
It seems to me I sing as well as thou;  
For mine's a song that is both true and plain,—  
Although I cannot quaver so in vain  
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how. 120

## XXV

All men may understanding have of me,  
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee;  
For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry:—  
Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE, then how may I  
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be?

## XXVI

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it is?  
Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,  
Then mean I, that I should be wonderous fain  
That shamefully they one and all were slain,  
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss. 130

## XXVII

And also would I that they all were dead,  
Who do not think in love their life to lead;  
For who is loth the God of Love to obey,  
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,  
And for that cause OSEE I cry; take heed!

## XXVIII

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,  
That all must love or die; but I withdraw,  
And take my leave of all such company,

For mine intent it neither is to die, 139  
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

## XXIX

For lovers of all folk that be alive,  
The most disquiet have and least do thrive;  
Most feeling have of sorrow, woe and care,  
And the least welfare cometh to their share;  
What need is there against the truth to  
strive?

## XXX

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy  
mind,  
That in thy churlishness a cause canst find  
To speak of Love's true Servants in this  
mood;  
For in this world no service is so good  
To every wight that gentle is of kind. 150

## XXXI

For thereof comes all goodness and all  
worth;  
All gentleness and honour thence come forth;  
Thence worship comes, content and true  
heart's pleasure,  
And full-assured trust, joy without measure,  
And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth;

## XXXII

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,  
And seemliness, and faithful company,  
And dread of shame that will not do amiss;  
For he that faithfully Love's servant is,  
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to  
die. 160

## XXXIII

And that the very truth it is which I  
Now say — in such belief I'll live and  
die;  
And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.  
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for  
bliss,  
If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

## XXXIV

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous  
fair,  
Yet for all that, the truth is found else-  
where;  
For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis:  
And Love in old folk a great dotage is;  
Who most it useth, him 't will most im-  
pair. 170

## XXXV

For thereof come all contraries to gladness!  
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming  
sadness,  
Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate,  
Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,  
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and mad-  
ness.

## XXXVI

Loving is aye an office of despair,  
And one thing is therein which is not fair;  
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,  
Unless it alway stay with him, I wis 179  
He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

## XXXVII

And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep  
nigh,  
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint  
cry,  
If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,  
Thou 'lt be as others that forsaken are;  
Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

## XXXVIII

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill be-  
seen!  
The God of Love afflict thee with all teen,  
For thou art worse than mad a thousand  
fold;  
For many a one hath virtues manifold,  
Who had been nought, if Love had never  
been. 190

## XXXIX

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,  
And he from every blemish them defendeth;  
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,  
In loyalty, and worshipful desire,  
And, when it likes him, joy enough them  
sendeth.

## XL

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still,  
For Love no reason hath but his own will; —  
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy;  
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,  
He lets them perish through that grievous  
ill. 200

## XLI

With such a master would I never be;  
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not  
see,

And knows not when he hurts and when he  
heals;  
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,  
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

## XLII

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,  
How from her inmost heart a sigh she  
brought,  
And said, Alas ! that ever I was born,  
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn, —  
And with that word, she into tears burst out.

## XLIII

Alas, alas ! my very heart will break, <sup>211</sup>  
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus  
speak  
Of Love, and of his holy services;  
Now, God of Love; thou help me in some  
wise,  
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may  
wreak.

## XLIV

And so methought I started up anon,  
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,  
Which at the Cuckoo hardly I cast,  
And he for dread did fly away full fast; <sup>219</sup>  
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was gone.

## XLV

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,  
Kept crying "Farewell ! — farewell, Pop-  
injay !"  
As if in scornful mockery of me;  
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,  
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

## XLVI

Then straightway came the Nightingale to  
me,  
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank  
thee,  
That thou wert near to rescue me; and  
now,  
Unto the God of Love I make a vow, <sup>229</sup>  
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

## XLVII

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,  
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,  
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou  
heard'st me;  
Yet if I live it shall amended be,  
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

## XLVIII

And one thing will I counsel thee also,  
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's  
saw;  
All that she said is an outrageous lie.  
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto, quoth  
I, <sup>239</sup>  
For Love, and it hath done me mighty woe.

## XLIX

Yea, hath it ? use, quoth she, this medicine;  
This May-time, every day before thou dine,  
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,  
Although for pain thou may'st be like to  
die,  
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and  
pine.

## L

And mind always that thou be good and  
true,  
And I will sing one song, of many new,  
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry;  
And then did she begin this song full high,  
"Beshrew all them that are in love untrue."

## LI

And soon as she had sung it to the end, <sup>251</sup>  
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must  
wend;  
And, God of Love, that can right well and  
may,  
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,  
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

## LII

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of  
me;  
I pray to God with her always to be,  
And joy of love to send her evermore;  
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her lore,  
For there is not so false a bird as she. <sup>260</sup>

## LIII

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,  
To all the Birds that lodged within that  
dale,  
And gathered each and all into one place;  
And them besought to hear her doleful case  
And thus it was that she began her tale.

## LIV

The Cuckoo — 't is not well that I should  
hide  
How she and I did each the other chide,

And without ceasing, since it was daylight;  
And now I pray you all to do me right <sup>269</sup>  
Of that false Bird whom Love can not abide.

## LV

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all  
gave;

This matter asketh counsel good as grave,  
For birds we are—all here together brought;  
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is not;  
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

## LVI

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,  
And other Peers whose names are on record;  
A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,  
And judgment there be given; or that intent  
Failing, we finally shall make accord. <sup>270</sup>

## LVII

And all this shall be done, without a nay,  
The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,  
Under a maple that is well beseen,  
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,  
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and  
gay.

## LVIII

She thankèd them; and then her leave she  
took,  
And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;  
And there she sate and sung—upon that  
tree—

“For term of life Love shall have hold of  
me”—

So loudly, that I with that song awoke. <sup>290</sup>

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,  
For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,  
Who did on thee the hardness bestow  
To appear before my Lady? but a sense  
Thou surely hast of her benevolence,  
Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth  
give;

For of all good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,  
To show to her some pleasant meanings  
writ

In winning words, since through her gen-  
tilness, <sup>300</sup>

Thee she accepts as for her service fit!  
Oh! it repents me I have neither wit  
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;  
For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,  
Though I be far from her I reverence,  
To think upon my truth and stedfastness,  
And to abridge my sorrow's violence,  
Caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,  
She of her liking proof to me would give;  
For of all good she is the best alive. <sup>311</sup>

## L'ENVOY

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladness! <sup>1</sup>  
Luna by night, with heavenly influence  
Illumined! root of beauty and goodness,  
Write, and allay, by your beneficence,  
My sighs breathed forth in silence,— com-  
fort give!

Since of all good, you are the best alive.

## EXPLICIT

## TROILOUS AND CRESIDA

FROM CHAUCER

1801. 1842

NEXT morning Troilus began to clear  
His eyes from sleep, at the first break of  
day,

And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,  
For love of God, full piteously did say,  
We must the Palace see of Cresida;  
For since we yet may have no other feast,  
Let us behold her Palace at the least!

And therewithal to cover his intent  
A cause he found into the Town to go,  
And they right forth to Cresid's Palace  
went; <sup>10</sup>

But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,  
Him thought his sorrowful heart would  
break in two;  
For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,  
Well nigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan be-  
hold,

How shut was every window of the place,  
Like frost he thought his heart was icy  
cold;

For which, with changèd, pale, and deadly  
face,

Without word uttered, forth he 'gan to  
pae;

And on his purpose bent so fast to ride, <sup>20</sup>  
That no wight his continuance espied.

Then said he thus, — O Palace desolate !  
 O house of houses, once so richly dight !  
 O Palace empty and disconsolate !  
 Thou lamp of which extinguished is the  
 light;  
 O Palace whilom day that now art night,  
 Thou ought'st to fall and I to die; since  
 she  
 Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast !  
 Palace illumined with the sun of bliss; 30  
 O ring of which the ruby now is lost,  
 O cause of woe, that cause has been of  
 bliss:

Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss  
 Thy cold doors; but I dare not for this rout;  
 Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is  
 out.

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,  
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold;  
 And when he might his time aright espy,  
 Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told  
 Both his new sorrow and his joys of old, 40  
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,  
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,  
 And everything to his remembrance  
 Came as he rode by places of the town  
 Where he had felt such perfect pleasure  
 once.

Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,  
 And in that Temple she with her bright  
 eyes,  
 My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I  
 Heard my own Cresid's laugh; and once  
 at play 51

I yonder saw her eke full blissfully;  
 And yonder once she unto me 'gan say —  
 Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I  
 pray !

And there so graciously did me behold,  
 That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house  
 Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,  
 So womanly, with voice melodious  
 Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear, 60  
 That in my soul methinks I yet do hear  
 The blissful sound; and in that very place  
 My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love ! then thus he cried,  
 When I the process have in memory,  
 How thou hast wearied me on every side,  
 Men thence a book might make, a history;  
 What need to seek a conquest over me,  
 Since I am wholly at thy will ? what joy  
 Hast thou thy own liege subjects to de-  
 stroy ? 70

Dread Lord ! so fearful when provoked,  
 thine ire  
 Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and  
 grief.  
 Now mercy, Lord ! thou know'st well I  
 desire  
 Thy grace above all pleasures first and  
 chief;  
 And live and die I will in thy belief;  
 For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,  
 That Cresida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,  
 As thou dost mine with longing her to see,  
 Then know I well that she would not so  
 journ. 80

Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be  
 Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,  
 As Juno was unto the Theban blood,  
 From whence to Thebes came griefs in mul-  
 titude.

And after this he to the gate did go,  
 Whence Cresid rode, as if in haste she was;  
 And up and down there went, and to and fro,  
 And to himself full oft he said, alas !  
 From hence my hope, and solace forth did  
 pass.

O would the blissful God now for his joy,  
 I might her see again coming to Troy ! 91

And up to yonder hill was I her guide;  
 Alas, and there I took of her my leave;  
 Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,  
 For very grief of which my heart shall  
 cleave; —

And hither home I came when it was eve;  
 And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,  
 And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,  
 That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less  
 Than he was wont; and that in whispers  
 soft 101  
 Men said, what may it be, can no one guess  
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness ?

All which he of himself conceited wholly  
Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,  
That every wight, who in the way passed  
by,  
Had of him ruth, and fancied that they  
said,  
I am right sorry Troilus will die:  
And thus a day or two drove wearily; 110  
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to lead  
As one that standeth betwixt hope and  
dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to  
show  
The occasion of his woe, as best he might;  
And made a fitting song, of words but few,  
Somewhat his woeful heart to make more  
light;  
And when he was removed from all men's  
sight,  
With a soft night voice, he of his Lady  
dear,  
That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light, 120  
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,  
That ever dark in torment, night by night,  
Toward my death with wind I steer and  
sail;

For which upon the tenth night if thou fail  
With thy bright beams to guide me but  
one hour,

My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung  
through,  
He fell again into his sorrows old;  
And every night, as was his wont to do,  
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold; 130  
And all his trouble to the moon he told,  
And said; I wis, when thou art horn'd  
anew,  
I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that  
morrow,  
When hence did journey my bright Lady  
dear,  
That cause is of my torment and my sor-  
row;  
For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and  
clear;  
For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;

For when thy horns begin once more to  
spring,  
Then shall she come, that with her bliss  
may bring. 140

The day is more, and longer every night  
Than they were wont to be — for he thought  
so;  
And that the sun did take his course not  
right,  
By longer way than he was wont to go;  
And said, I am in constant dread I trow,  
That Phaeton his son is yet alive,  
His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,  
To the end that he the Grecian host might  
see; 149  
And ever thus he to himself would talk: —  
Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;  
Or yonder is it that the tents must be;  
And thence does come this air which is so  
sweet,  
That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and  
more  
By moments thus increaseth in my face,  
Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;  
I prove it thus; for in no other space  
Of all this town, save only in this place, 159  
Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain;  
It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,  
Till fully past and gone was the ninth  
night;  
And ever at his side stood Pandarus,  
Who busily made use of all his might  
To comfort him, and make his heart more  
light;  
Giving him always hope, that she the  
morrow  
Of the tenth day will come, and end his  
sorrow.

## THE SAILOR'S MOTHER

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I met this  
woman near the Wishing-gate, on the high-  
road that then led from Grasmere to Amble-  
side. Her appearance was exactly as here  
described, and such was her account, nearly to  
the letter.

ONE morning (raw it was and wet —  
A foggy day in winter time)  
A Woman on the road I met,  
Not old, though something past her  
prime:

Majestic in her person, tall and straight;  
And like a Roman matron's was her mien  
and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead;  
Old times, thought I, are breathing there;  
Proud was I that my country bred  
Such strength, a dignity so fair: 10  
She begged an alms, like one in poor  
estate;

I looked at her again, nor did my pride  
abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,  
"What is it," said I, "that you bear,  
Beneath the covert of your Cloak,  
Protected from this cold damp air?"  
She answered, soon as she the question  
heard,

"A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-  
bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,  
"I had a Son, who many a day 20  
Sailed on the seas, but he is dead;  
In Denmark he was cast away:  
And I have travelled weary miles to  
see

If aught which he had owned might still  
remain for me.

"The bird and cage they both were  
his:

'T was my Son's bird; and neat and  
trim

He kept it: many voyages

The singing-bird had gone with him;

When last he sailed, he left the bird  
behind;

From bodings, as might be, that hung upon  
his mind. 30

"He to a fellow-lodger's care  
Had left it, to be watched and fed,  
And pipe its song in safety; — there  
I found it when my Son was dead;  
And now, God help me for my little  
wit!

I bear it with me, Sir; — he took so much  
delight in it."

## ALICE FELL

## OR, POVERTY

1802. 1807

Written to gratify Mr. Graham of Glasgow,  
brother of the Author of "The Sabbath." He  
was a zealous coadjutor of Mr. Clarkson, and a  
man of ardent humanity. The incident had  
happened to himself, and he urged me to put  
it into verse, for humanity's sake. The hum-  
bleness, meanness if you like, of the subject,  
together with the homely mode of treating it,  
brought upon me a world of ridicule by the  
small critics, so that in policy I excluded it  
from many editions of my Poems, till it was  
restored at the request of some of my friends,  
in particular my son-in-law, Edward Quillinan.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,  
For threatening clouds the moon had  
drowned;

When, as we hurried on, my ear  
Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,  
I heard the sound, — and more and more,  
It seemed to follow with the chaise,  
And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out;  
He stopped his horses at the word, 10  
But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,  
Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast  
The horses scampered through the rain;  
But, hearing soon upon the blast  
The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,  
"Whence comes," said I, "this piteous  
moan?"

And there a little Girl I found,  
Sitting behind the chaise, alone. 20

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,  
But loud and bitterly she wept,  
As if her innocent heart would break;  
And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?" — she sobbed  
"Look here!"

I saw it in the wheel entangled,  
A weather-beaten rag as e'er  
From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,  
It hung, nor could at once be freed;  
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,  
A miserable rag indeed ! 30

"And whither are you going, child,  
To-night along these lonesome ways ?"  
"To Durham," answered she, half wild—  
"Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief  
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send  
Sob after sob, as if her grief  
Could never, never have an end. 40

"My child, in Durham do you dwell ?"  
She checked herself in her distress,  
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;  
I'm fatherless and motherless."

"And I to Durham, Sir, belong."  
Again, as if the thought would choke  
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;  
And all was for her tattered cloak !

The chaise drove on; our journey's end  
Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,  
As if she had lost her only friend  
She wept, nor would be pacified. 50

Up to the tavern-door we post;  
Of Alice and her grief I told;  
And I gave money to the host,  
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,  
As warm a cloak as man can sell !"  
Proud creature was she the next day,  
The little orphan, Alice Fell ! 60

## BEGGARS

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Met, and described to me by my Sister, near the quarry at the head of Rydal lake, a place still a chosen resort of vagrants travelling with their families.

SHE had a tall man's height or more;  
Her face from summer's noontide heat  
No bonnet shaded, but she wore  
A mantle, to her very feet

Descending with a graceful flow,  
And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown:  
Haughty, as if her eye had seen  
Its own light to a distance thrown,  
She towered, fit person for a Queen 10  
To lead those ancient Amazonian files;  
Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand  
And begged an alms with doleful plea  
That ceased not; on our English land  
Such woes, I knew, could never be;  
And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature  
Was beautiful to see — a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way;  
And soon before me did espy 20  
A pair of little Boys at play,  
Chasing a crimson butterfly;  
The taller followed with his hat in hand,  
Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown  
With leaves of laurel stuck about;  
And, while both followed up and down,  
Each whooping with a merry shout,  
In their fraternal features I could trace  
Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face. 30

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit  
For finest tasks of earth or air:  
Wings let them have, and they might flit  
Precursors to Aurora's car,  
Scattering fresh flowers; though happier  
far, I ween,  
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level green.

They dart across my path — but lo,  
Each ready with a plaintive whine !  
Said I, "not half an hour ago  
Your Mother has had alms of mine." 40  
"That cannot be," one answered — "she is dead." —  
I looked reproof — they saw — but neither hung his head.



"She has been dead, Sir, many a day." —  
 "Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie;  
 It was your Mother, as I say !"  
 And, in the twinkling of an eye,  
 "Come ! Come !" cried one, and without  
     more ado,  
 Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants  
     flew !

## TO A BUTTERFLY

1802. 1807

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.  
 My sister and I were parted immediately after  
 the death of our mother, who died in 1778,  
 both being very young.

STAY near me — do not take thy flight !  
 A little longer stay in sight !  
 Much converse do I find in thee,  
 Historian of my infancy !  
 Float near me; do not yet depart !  
 Dead times revive in thee:  
 Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !  
 A solemn image to my heart,  
 My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,  
 The time, when, in our childish plays,  
 My sister Emmeline and I  
 Together chased the butterfly !  
 A very hunter did I rush  
 Upon the prey: — with leaps and springs  
 I followed on from brake to bush;  
 But she, God love her, feared to brush  
 The dust from off its wings.

## THE EMIGRANT MOTHER

1802. 1807

Suggested by what I have noticed in more  
 than one French fugitive during the time of  
 the French Revolution. If I am not mistaken,  
 the lines were composed at Sockburn, when I  
 was on a visit to Mrs. Wordsworth and her  
 brother.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned  
 In which a Lady driven from France did  
     dwell;  
 The big and lesser griefs with which she  
     mourned,  
 In friendship she to me would often tell.  
 This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,  
 Where she was childless, daily would repair

To a poor neighbouring cottage; as I found,  
 For sake of a young Child whose home was  
     there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond em-  
     brace  
 This Child, I chanted to myself a lay, 10  
 Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to  
     trace  
 Such things as she unto the Babe might  
     say:  
 And thus, from what I heard and knew, or  
     guessed,  
 My song the workings of her heart ex-  
     pressed.

## I

"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,  
 One moment let me be thy mother !  
 An infant's face and looks are thine,  
 And sure a mother's heart is mine:  
 Thy own dear mother's far away,  
 At labour in the harvest field: 20  
 Thy little sister is at play; —  
 What warmth, what comfort would it yield  
 To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be  
 One little hour a child to me !

## II

"Across the waters I am come,  
 And I have left a babe at home:  
 A long, long way of land and sea !  
 Come to me — I 'm no enemy:  
 I am the same who at thy side  
 Sate yesterday, and made a nest 30  
 For thee, sweet Baby ! — thou hast tried,  
 Thou know'st the pillow of my breast;  
 Good, good art thou: — alas ! to me  
 Far more than I can be to thee.

## III

"Here, little Darling, dost thou lie;  
 An infant thou, a mother I !  
 Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears;  
 Mine art thou — spite of these my tears.  
 Alas ! before I left the spot,  
 My baby and its dwelling-place; 40  
 The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not  
 Be shed upon an infant's face,  
 It was unlucky' — no, no, no;  
 No truth is in them who say so !

## IV

"My own dear Little-one will sigh,  
 Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.

'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,  
And you may see his hour is come.'  
Oh! had he but thy cheerful smiles,  
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay, 50  
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,  
And countenance like a summer's day,  
They would have hopes of him;—and  
then  
I should behold his face again!

V

"T is gone — like dreams that we forget;  
There was a smile or two — yet — yet  
I can remember them, I see  
The smiles, worth all the world to me.  
Dear Baby! I must lay thee down;  
Thou troublest me with strange alarms; 60  
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own;  
I cannot keep thee in my arms;  
For they confound me; — where — where is  
That last, that sweetest smile of his?

VI

"Oh! how I love thee! — we will stay  
Together here this one half day.  
My sister's child, who bears my name,  
From France to sheltering England came;  
She with her mother crossed the sea;  
The babe and mother near me dwell: 70  
Yet does my yearning heart to thee  
Turn rather, though I love her well:  
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!  
Never was any child more dear!

VII

"— I cannot help it; ill intent  
I've none, my pretty Innocent!  
I weep — I know they do thee wrong,  
These tears — and my poor idle tongue.  
Oh, what a kiss was that! my cheek  
How cold it is! but thou art good; 80  
Thine eyes are on me — they would speak,  
I think, to help me if they could.  
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,  
My heart again is in its place!

VIII

"While thou art mine, my little Love,  
This cannot be a sorrowful grove;  
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,  
I seem to find them all in thee:  
Here's grass to play with, here are flowers;  
I'll call thee by my darling's name; 90  
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,  
Thy features seem to me the same;

His little sister thou shalt be;  
And, when once more my home I see,  
I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

"MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN  
I BEHOLD"

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

"AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS  
MY LOVE HAD BEEN"

1802. 1807

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been;  
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that  
grew  
About her home; but she had never seen  
A glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy  
night  
A single glow-worm did I chance to espy;  
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,  
And from my horse I leapt; great joy had I.

'Upon a leaf the glow-worm did I lay,  
To bear it with me through the stormy  
night:  
And, as before, it shone without dismay;  
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the dwelling of my Love I came,  
I went into the orchard quietly;  
And left the glow-worm, blessing it by name,  
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped  
with fear;  
At night the glow-worm shone beneath the  
tree;  
I led my Lucy to the spot, "Look here,"  
Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!

## WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT  
THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER

1802. 1807

Extempore. This little poem was a favourite with Joanna Baillie.

THE Cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun;  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest;  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising;  
There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill;  
The ploughboy is whooping — anon — anon:  
There's joy in the mountains;  
There's life in the fountains;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing;  
The rain is over and gone !

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE  
BUTTERFLY

1802. 1807

Observed, as described, in the then beautiful  
orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

ART thou the bird whom Man loves  
best,  
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,  
Our little English Robin;  
The bird that comes about our doors  
When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?  
Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?  
Their Thomas in Finland,  
And Russia far inland ?  
The bird, that by some name or other  
All men who know thee call their brother,  
The darling of children and men ?  
Could Father Adam open his eyes  
And see this sight beneath the skies,  
He'd wish to close them again.

— If the butterfly knew but his friend,  
Hither his flight he would bend;  
And find his way to me,  
Under the branches of the tree:  
In and out, he darts about;  
Can this be the bird, to man so good, 20  
That, after their bewildering,  
Covered with leaves the little children,  
So painfully in the wood ?  
What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st  
pursue

A beautiful creature,  
That is gentle by nature ?  
Beneath the summer sky  
From flower to flower let him fly;  
'Tis all that he wishes to do. 29  
The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,  
He is the friend of our summer gladness:  
What hinders, then, that ye should be  
Playmates in the sunny weather,  
And fly about in the air together !  
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,  
A crimson as bright as thine own:  
Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,  
O pious Bird ! whom man loves best,  
Love him, or leave him alone !

## TO A BUTTERFLY

1802. 1807

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

I've watched you now a full half-hour,  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;  
And, little Butterfly ! indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless ! — not frozen seas  
More motionless ! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;  
My trees they are, my sister's flowers;  
Here rest your wings when they are  
weary;  
Here lodge as in a sanctuary !  
Come often to us, fear no wrong;  
Sit near us on the bough !  
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,  
And summer days, when we were young;  
Sweet childish days, that were as long  
As twenty days are now.

## FORESIGHT

1802. 1807

Also composed in the orchard, Town-end,  
Grasmere.

THAT is work of waste and ruin —  
Do as Charles and I are doing !  
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,  
We must spare them — here are many:  
Look at it — the flower is small,  
Small and low, though fair as any:  
Do not touch it ! summers two  
I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !  
Pull as many as you can. 10  
— Here are daisies, take your fill;  
Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower:  
Of the lofty daffodil  
Make your bed, or make your bower;  
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom;  
Only spare the strawberry-blossom !

Primroses, the Spring may love them —  
Summer knows but little of them:  
Violets, a barren kind, 20  
Withered on the ground must lie;  
Daisies leave no fruit behind  
When the pretty flowerets die;  
Pluck them, and another year  
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power  
To the favoured strawberry-flower.  
Hither soon as spring is fled  
You and Charles and I will walk;  
Lurking berries, ripe and red, 30  
Then will hang on every stalk,  
Each within its leafy bower;  
And for that promise spare the flower !

## TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air.

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,  
Let them live upon their praises;  
Long as there's a sun that sets,  
Primroses will have their glory;  
Long as there are violets,  
They will have a place in story:  
There's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far  
For the finding of a star; 10  
Up and down the heavens they go,  
Men that keep a mighty rout !  
I'm as great as they, I trow,  
Since the day I found thee out,  
Little Flower ! — I'll make a stir,  
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf  
Bold, and lavish of thyself;  
Since we needs must first have met  
I have seen thee, high and low, 20  
Thirty years or more, and yet  
'Twas a face I did not know;  
Thou hast now, go where I may,  
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,  
In the time before the thrush  
Has a thought about her nest,  
Thou wilt come with half a call,  
Spreading out thy glossy breast  
Like a careless Prodigal; 30  
Telling tales about the sun,  
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !  
Travel with the multitude:  
Never heed them; I aver  
That they all are wanton wooers;  
But the thrifty cottager,  
Who stirs little out of doors,  
Joys to spy thee near her home;  
Spring is coming, Thou art come ! 40

Comfort have thou of thy merit,  
Kindly, unassuming Spirit !  
Careless of thy neighbourhood,  
Thou dost show thy pleasant face  
On the moor, and in the wood,  
In the lane; — there's not a place,  
Howsoever mean it be,  
But 't is good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,  
Children of the flaring hours ! 50

Buttercups, that will be seen,  
Whether we will see or no;  
Others, too, of lofty mien;  
They have done as worldlings do,  
Taken praise that should be thine,  
Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,  
Ill-requited upon earth;  
Herald of a mighty band,  
Of a joyous train ensuing, 60  
Serving at my heart's command,  
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,  
I will sing, as doth bebove,  
Hymns in praise of what I love !

### TO THE SAME FLOWER

1802. 1807

PLEASURES newly found are sweet  
When they lie about our feet:  
February last, my heart  
First at sight of thee was glad;  
All unheard of as thou art,  
Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
Celandine ! and long ago,  
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
Whosoe'er the man might be, 10  
Who the first with pointed rays  
(Workman worthy to be sainted)  
Set the sign-board in a blaze,  
When the rising sun he painted  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
News of winter's vanishing,  
And the children build their bowers,  
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould 20  
All about with full-blown flowers,  
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !  
With the proudest thou art there,  
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
By myself a lonely pleasure,  
Sighed to think, I read a book  
Only read, perhaps, by me;  
Yet I long could overlook  
Thy bright coronet and Thee, 30  
And thy arch and wily ways,  
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;  
While the patient primrose sits  
Like a beggar in the cold,  
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold;  
Liveliest of the vernal train  
When ye all are out again. 40

Drawn by what peculiar spell,  
By what charm of sight or smell,  
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,  
Labouring for her waxen cells,  
Fondly settle upon Thee  
Prized above all buds and bells  
Opening daily at thy side,  
By the season multiplied ?

Thou art not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon:" 50  
Let the bold Discoverer thrid  
In his bark the polar sea;  
Rear who will a pyramid;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower.

### RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old  
Man I met a few hundred yards from my out-  
tage; and the account of him is taken from  
his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling  
described in the beginning of the poem, while  
crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's,  
at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham.  
The image of the hare I then observed on the  
ridge of the Fell.

I

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie  
chatters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise  
of waters.

II

All things that love the sun are out of doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;

The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on  
the moors<sup>10</sup>  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy  
earth  
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she  
doth run.

## III

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,  
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:  
The pleasant season did my heart employ:  
My old remembrances went from me wholly;  
And all the ways of men, so vain and mel-  
ancholy.<sup>21</sup>

## IV

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low;  
To me that morning did it happen so;  
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;  
Dim sadness — and blind thoughts, I knew  
not, nor could name.

## V

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky;  
And I bethought me of the playful hare:  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;<sup>31</sup>  
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all  
care;  
But there may come another day to me —  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

## VI

My whole life I have lived in pleasant  
thought,  
As if life's business were a summer mood;  
As if all needful things would come un-  
sought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;  
But how can He expect that others should  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call  
Love him, who for himself will take no heed  
at all?<sup>42</sup>

## VII

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his  
pride;

Of Him who walked in glory and in joy  
Following his plough, along the mountain-  
side:

By our own spirits are we deified:  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency  
and madness.

## VIII

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,<sup>50</sup>  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts had  
striven,  
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares:  
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore  
grey hairs.

## IX

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come, and  
whence;<sup>60</sup>  
So that it seems a thing endued with sense:  
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a  
shelf  
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself;

## X

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor  
dead,  
Nor all asleep — in his extreme old age:  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
A more than human weight upon his frame  
had cast.<sup>70</sup>

## XI

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale  
face,  
Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood:  
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That heareth not the loud winds when they  
call

And moveth all together, if it move at all.

## XII

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond  
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look

Upon the muddy water, which he conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book: 81  
And now, a stranger's privilege I took;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
"This morning gives us promise of a glo-  
rious day."

## XIII

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he slowly  
drew:

And him with further words I thus bespake,  
"What occupation do you there pursue?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise 90  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid  
eyes,

## XIV

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance drest —  
Choice word and measured phrase, above  
the reach

Of ordinary men; a stately speech;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and man  
their dues.

## XV

He told, that to these waters he had come  
To gather leeches, being old and poor: 100  
Employment hazardous and wearisome!  
And he had many hardships to endure:  
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor  
to moor;

Housing, with God's good help, by choice or  
chance,  
And in this way he gained an honest main-  
tenance.

## XVI

The old Man still stood talking by my side;  
But now his voice to me was like a stream  
Scarce heard; nor word from word could  
I divide;

And the whole body of the Man did seem  
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;  
Or like a man from some far region sent,  
To give me human strength, by apt admon-  
ishment. 112

## XVII

My former thoughts returned: the fear that  
kills;  
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;

Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;  
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
— Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,  
My question eagerly did I renew,  
"How is it that you live, and what is it you  
do?"

## XVIII

He with a smile did then his words repeat;  
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and  
wide 121

He travelled; stirring thus above his feet  
The waters of the pools where they abide.

"Once I could meet with them on every  
side;

But they have dwindled long by slow decay;  
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I  
may."

## XIX

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
The old Man's shape, and speech — all trou-  
bled me:

In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
About the weary moors continually, 130  
Wandering about alone and silently.

While I these thoughts within myself pur-  
sued,

He, having made a pause, the same discourse  
renewed.

## XX

And soon with this he other matter blended,  
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,  
But stately in the main; and when he ended,  
I could have laughed myself to scorn to  
find

In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.

"God," said I, "be my help and stay se-  
cure;

I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the  
lonely moor!" 140

## "I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ"

1802. 1807

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain  
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest  
mood

Of that Man's mind — what can it be?  
what food

Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could  
he gain?

'Tis not in battles that from youth we  
train  
The Governor who must be wise and good,  
And temper with the sternness of the brain  
Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-  
hood.  
Wisdom doth live with children round her  
knees:  
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the  
talk  
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly  
walk  
Of the mind's business: these are the  
degrees  
By which true Sway doth mount; this is  
the stalk  
True Power doth grow on; and her rights  
are these.

## A FAREWELL

1802. 1815

Composed just before my sister and I went  
to fetch Mrs. Wordsworth from Gallow-hill,  
near Scarborough.

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-  
ground,  
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair  
Of that magnificent temple which doth  
bound  
One side of our whole vale with grandeur  
rare;  
Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,  
The loveliest spot that man hath ever  
found,  
Farewell! — we leave thee to Heaven's  
peaceful care,  
Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost  
surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,  
And there will safely ride when we are  
gone;  
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble  
door  
Will prosper, though untended and alone:  
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have  
none:  
These narrow bounds contain our private  
store  
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine  
upon;  
Here are they in our sight — we have no  
more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and  
bell!

For two months now in vain we shall be  
sought:

We leave you here in solitude to dwell  
With these our latest gifts of tender  
thought;

Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,  
Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, fare-  
well!

Whom from the borders of the Lake we  
brought,

And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;  
And she will prize this Bower, this Indian  
shed,

Our own contrivance, Building without  
peer!

— A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,  
Whose pleasures are in wild fields gather'd,  
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful  
cheer,

Will come to you; to you herself will wed;  
And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with  
tender heed,

Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms  
blown

Among the distant mountains, flower and  
weed,

Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,  
Making all kindness registered and known;  
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child  
indeed,

Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,  
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little  
need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,  
Thou hast thy wayward moods, as thou  
dost show

To them who look not daily on thy face;  
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost  
know,

And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let  
them go!"

Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race  
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,  
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,  
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and  
best;



Joy will be flown in its mortality;  
 Something must stay to tell us of the rest.  
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep  
 rock's breast

Glittered at evening like a starry sky;  
 And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,  
 Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep  
 Hath been so friendly to industrious hours;  
 And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep  
 Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of  
 flowers,  
 And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers;  
 Two burning months let summer overleap,  
 And, coming back with Her who will be  
 ours,  
 Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

"THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN  
 SET"

1802. 1807

Reprinted at the request of my Sister, in  
 whose presence the lines were thrown off.

This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago,  
 among the Author's poems. from which, in sub-  
 sequent editions, it was excluded.

THE sun has long been set,  
 The stars are out by twos and threes,  
 The little birds are piping yet  
 Among the bushes and trees;  
 There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,  
 And a far-off wind that rushes,  
 And a sound of water that gushes,  
 And the cuckoo's sovereign cry  
 Fills all the hollow of the sky.

Who would "go parading,"  
 In London, "and masquerading,"  
 On such a night of June  
 With that beautiful soft half-moon,  
 And all these innocent blisses ?  
 On such a night as this is !

COMPOSED UPON WESTMIN-  
 STER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1802

1802. 1807

Written on the roof of a coach, on my way  
 to France.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
 A sight so touching in its majesty:

This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples  
 lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless  
 air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !  
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep;  
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,  
 NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

1802. 1807

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west,  
 Star of my Country ! — on the horizon's  
 brink

Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to  
 sink

On England's bosom; yet well pleased to  
 rest,

Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest  
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,  
 Should'st be my Country's emblem; and  
 should'st wink,

Bright Star ! with laughter on her ban-  
 ners, drest

In thy fresh beauty. There ! that dusky  
 spot

Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.  
 Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,  
 One life, one glory ! — I, with many a fear  
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,  
 Among men who do not love her, linger  
 here.

CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

1802. 1807

Is it a reed that 's shaken by the wind,  
 Or what is it that ye go forth to see ?  
 Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low  
 degree,

Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame,  
 and blind,

Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,  
 With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the  
 knee

In France, before the new-born Majesty.

'T is ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,  
A seemly reverence may be paid to power;  
But that 's a loyal virtue, never sown  
In haste, nor springing with a transient  
shower:  
When truth, when sense, when liberty were  
flown,  
What hardship had it been to wait an  
hour?  
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery  
prone!

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON  
THE ROAD LEADING TO AR-  
DRES, AUGUST 7, 1802

1802. 1807

JONES! as from Calais southward you and I  
Went pacing side by side, this public Way  
Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous  
day,  
When faith was pledged to new-born Lib-  
erty:  
A homeless sound of joy was in the sky:  
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth  
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, gar-  
lands, mirth,  
Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!  
And now, sole register that these things  
were,  
Two solitary greetings have I heard,  
"Good-morrow, Citizen!" a hollow word,  
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair  
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird  
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802

1802. 1807

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not  
names:  
This is young Buonaparté's natal day,  
And his is henceforth an established sway—  
Consul for life. With worship France pro-  
claims  
Her approbation, and with pomps and  
games.  
Heaven grant that other Cities may be  
gay!  
Calais is not: and I have bent my way  
To the sea-coast, noting that each man  
frames

His business as he likes. Far other show  
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder  
time;  
The senselessness of joy was then sublime!  
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,  
Consul, or King, can sound himself to know  
The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

"IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVEN-  
ING, CALM AND FREE"

1802. 1807

This was composed on the beach near Calais,  
in the autumn of 1802.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea:  
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with  
me here,  
If thou appear untouched by solemn  
thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;  
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE  
VENETIAN REPUBLIC

1802. 1807

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in  
fee;  
And was the safeguard of the west: the  
worth  
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.  
She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
And, when she took unto herself a Mate,  
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.  
And what if she had seen those glories fade,  
Those titles vanish, and that strength  
decay;  
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
When her long life hath reached its final  
day:

Men are we, and must grieve when even  
the Shade  
Of that which once was great, is passed  
away.

### THE KING OF SWEDEN

1802. 1807

THE Voice of song from distant lands shall  
call  
To that great King; shall hail the crownèd  
Youth  
Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,  
By one example hath set forth to all  
How they with dignity may stand; or fall,  
If fall they must. Now, whither doth it  
tend?  
And what to him and his shall be the end?  
That thought is one which neither can  
appal  
Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede  
hath done  
The thing which ought to be; is raised  
above  
All consequences: work he hath begun  
Of fortitude, and piety, and love,  
Which all his glorious ancestors approve:  
The heroes bless him, him their rightful son.

### TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

1802. 1807

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of  
men!  
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his  
plough  
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's careless  
den;—  
O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do  
thou  
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:  
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,  
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left  
behind  
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth,  
and skies;  
There's not a breathing of the common  
wind  
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

### COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LANDING

1802. 1807

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once  
more.  
The cock that crows, the smoke that curls,  
that sound  
Of bells; those boys who in yon meadow-  
ground  
In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and  
the roar  
Of the waves breaking on the chalky  
shore;—  
All, all are English. Oft have I looked  
round  
With joy in Kent's green vales; but never  
found  
Myself so satisfied in heart before.  
Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,  
Thought for another moment. Thou art  
free,  
My Country! and 't is joy enough and  
pride  
For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the  
grass  
Of England once again, and hear and see,  
With such a dear Companion at my side.

### SEPTEMBER 1, 1802

1802. 1807

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that  
disgraced those times, was the chasing of all  
Negroes from France by decree of the govern-  
ment: we had a Fellow-passenger who was one  
of the expelled.

WE had a female Passenger who came  
From Calais with us, spotless in array, —  
A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,  
Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame;  
Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim  
She sate, from notice turning not away,  
But on all proffered intercourse did lay  
A weight of languid speech, or to the same  
No sign of answer made by word or face:  
Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,  
That, burning independent of the mind,  
Joined with the lustre of her rich attire  
To mock the Outcast. — O ye Heavens, be  
kind!  
And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!

NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER 1802

1802. 1807

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
And saw, while sea was calm and air was  
clear,  
The coast of France — the coast of France  
how near!  
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.  
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood  
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,  
A span of waters; yet what power is there!  
What mightiness for evil and for good!  
Even so doth God protect us if we be  
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters  
roll,  
Strength to the brave, and Power, and  
Deity;  
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree  
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
soul  
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1802

1802. 1807

This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets.

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must  
look  
For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd,  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,  
cook,

Or groom! — We must run glittering like  
a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore:  
Plain living and high thinking are no more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household  
laws.

LONDON, 1802

1802. 1807

MILTON! thou should'st be living at this  
hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and  
bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,  
power.  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like  
the sea:  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

"GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN  
AMONG US"

1802. 1807

GREAT men have been among us; hands  
that penned  
And tongues that uttered wisdom — better  
none:  
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
Young Vane, and others who called Milton  
friend.  
These moralists could act and comprehend:  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendour: what strength was, that  
would not bend  
But in magnanimous meekness. France,  
't is strange,

Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.

Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road ;  
But equally a want of books and men !

"IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT  
OF"

1802. 1807

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, un-  
withstood,"

Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous Stream in bogs and  
sands

Should perish ; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old :  
We must be free or die, who speak the  
tongue

That Shakspeare spake ; the faith and  
morals hold

Which Milton held. — In everything we are  
sprung

Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

"WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN  
MEMORY"

1802. 1807

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed

Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts  
depart

When men change swords for ledgers, and  
desert

The student's bower for gold, some fears  
unnamed

I had, my Country ! — am I to be blamed ?  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,

Verily, in the bottom of my heart,

Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.

For dearly must we prize thee ; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men :

And I by my affection was beguiled :

What wonder if a Poet now and then,

Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY  
ACROSS THE HAMBLETON  
HILLS, YORKSHIRE

1802. 1807

Composed October 4th, 1802, after a journey over the Hambleton Hills, on a day memorable to me — the day of my marriage. The horizon commanded by those hills is most magnificent. — The next day, while we were travelling in a post-chaise up Wensleydale, we were stopt by one of the horses proving restive, and were obliged to wait two hours in a severe storm before the post-boy could fetch from the inn another to supply its place. The spot was in front of Bolton Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner soon after her unfortunate landing at Workington. The place then belonged to the Scroopes, and memorials of her are yet preserved there. To beguile the time I composed a Sonnet. The subject was our own confinement contrasted with hers ; but it was not thought worthy of being preserved.

DARK and more dark the shades of evening  
fell ;

The wished-for point was reached — but at  
an hour

When little could be gained from that rich  
dower

Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.  
Yet did the glowing west with marvellous

power  
Salute us ; there stood Indian citadel,

Temple of Greece, and minster with its  
tower

Substantially expressed — a place for bell  
Or clock to toll from ! Many a tempting  
isle,

With groves that never were imagined, lay  
'Mid seas how steadfast ! objects all for  
the eye

Of silent rapture ; but we felt the while  
We should forget them ; they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOM-  
SON'S "CASTLE OF INDOLENCE"

1802. 1815

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grassmere, Coleridge living with us much at the time : his son Hartley has said, that his father's

character and habits are here preserved in a livelier way than in anything that has been written about him.

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One  
Whom without blame I may not overlook;  
For never sun or living creature shone  
Who more devout enjoyment with us took:  
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,  
On his own time here would he float away,  
As doth a fly upon a summer brook;  
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,  
Seek for him, — he is fled; and whither  
none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful  
home,  
And find elsewhere his business or delight;  
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam:  
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,  
His voice came to us from the neighbour-  
ing height:  
Oft could we see him driving full in view  
At mid-day when the sun was shining  
bright;  
What ill was on him, what he had to do,  
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet  
crew.

Ah! piteous sight it was to see this Man  
When he came back to us, a withered  
flower, —  
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.  
Down would he sit; and without strength  
or power  
Look at the common grass from hour to  
hour:  
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,  
Where apple-trees in blossom made a  
bower,  
Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay;  
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself  
away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was  
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew;  
For happier soul no living creature has  
Than he had, being here the long day  
through.  
Some thought he was a lover, and did  
woo:  
Some thought far worse of him, and judged  
him wrong;  
But verse was what he had been wedded  
to;

And his own mind did like a tempest strong  
Come to him thus, and drove the weary  
Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly  
guise,  
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,  
A noticeable Man with large gray eyes,  
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly  
As if a blooming face it ought to be;  
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,  
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;  
Profound his forehead was, though not  
severe;  
Yet some did think that he had little busi-  
ness here.

Sweet heaven forfend! his was a lawful  
right;  
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;  
His limbs would toss about him with delight  
Like branches when strong winds the trees  
annoy.  
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy  
To banish listlessness and irksome care;  
He would have taught you how you might  
employ  
Yourself; and many did to him repair, —  
And certes not in vain; he had inventions  
rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried:  
Long blades of grass, plucked round him  
as he lay,  
Made, to his ear attentively applied,  
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play;  
Glasses he had, that little things display,  
The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,  
A mailed angel on a battle-day;  
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,  
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies  
do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear  
His music, and to view his imagery:  
And, sooth, these two were each to the  
other dear:  
No livelier love in such a place could be:  
There did they dwell — from earthly labour  
free,  
As happy spirits as were ever seen;  
If but a bird, to keep them company,  
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,  
As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-  
queen.

## TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD

1802. 1807

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are  
brought;

Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,  
And fittest to unutterable thought  
The breeze-like motion and the self-born  
carol;

Thou faery voyager! that dost float  
In such clear water, that thy boat  
May rather seem  
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;  
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
Where earth and heaven do make one  
imagery; 10

O blessed vision! happy child!  
Thou art so exquisitely wild,  
I think of thee with many fears  
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be  
thy guest,

Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest  
But when she sate within the touch of thee.  
O too industrious folly!

O vain and causeless melancholy! 20  
Nature will either end thee quite;  
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown  
flocks.

What hast thou to do with sorrow,  
Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn  
brings forth,

Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
A gem that glitters while it lives, 30  
And no forewarning gives;  
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife  
Slips in a moment out of life.

## TO THE DAISY

1802. 1807

This and the two following were composed  
in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, where  
the bird was often seen as here described.

"Her divine skill taught me this,  
That from every thing I saw  
I could some instruction draw,

And raise pleasure to the height  
Through the meanest object's sight.  
By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least bough's rustelling;  
By a Daisy whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed;  
Or a shady bush or tree;  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man."

G. WITHER.

In youth from rock to rock I went,  
From hill to hill in discontent  
Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
Most pleased when most uneasy;  
But now my own delights I make, —  
My thirst at every rill can slake,  
And gladly Nature's love partake,  
Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears  
That thinly decks his few grey hairs; 10  
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,  
That she may sun thee;  
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;  
And Autumn, melancholy Wight!  
Doth in thy crimson head delight  
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;  
Pleased at his greeting thee again;  
Yet nothing daunted, 20  
Nor grieved if thou be set at nought:  
And oft alone in nooks remote  
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews  
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose;  
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews  
Her head impearling,  
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
Yet hast not gone without thy fame; 30  
Thou art indeed by many a claim  
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
Or, some bright day of April sky,  
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie  
Near the green holly,  
And wearily at length should fare;  
He needs but look about, and there  
Thou art! — a friend at hand, to scare  
His melancholy. 40

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,

Have I derived from thy sweet power  
 Some apprehension;  
 Some steady love; some brief delight;  
 Some memory that had taken flight;  
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right;  
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
 I drink out of an humbler urn 51  
 A lowlier pleasure;  
 The homely sympathy that heeds  
 The common life, our nature breeds;  
 A wisdom fitted to the needs  
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,  
 When thou art up, alert and gay,  
 Then, cheerful Flower! my spirits play 60  
 With kindred gladness:  
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest  
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
 Hath often eased my pensive breast  
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,  
 All seasons through, another debt,  
 Which I, wherever thou art met,  
 To thee am owing;  
 An instinct call it, a blind sense;  
 A happy, genial influence, 70  
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,  
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run  
 Thy pleasant course, — when day's begun  
 As ready to salute the sun  
 As lark or leveret,  
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;  
 Nor be less dear to future men  
 Than in old time; — thou not in vain 80  
 Art Nature's favourite.

## TO THE SAME FLOWER

1802. 1807

With little here to do or see  
 Of things that in the great world be,  
 Daisy! again I talk to thee,  
 For thou art worthy,  
 Thou unassuming Common-place  
 Of Nature, with that homely face,  
 And yet with something of a grace,  
 Which Love makes for thee!

Off on the dappled turf at ease  
 I sit, and play with similies, 10  
 Loose types of things through all degrees,  
 Thoughts of thy raising:  
 And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
 As is the humour of the game,  
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;  
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport 20  
 Of all temptations;  
 A queen in crown of rubies drest;  
 A starveling in a scanty vest;  
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
 Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next — and instantly  
 The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish — and behold  
 A silver shield with boss of gold, 30  
 That spreads itself, some faery bold  
 In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar —  
 And then thou art a pretty star;  
 Not quite so fair as many are  
 In heaven above thee!  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; —  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
 Who shall reprove thee! 40

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
 Sweet silent creature!  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
 Of thy meek nature!

## TO THE DAISY

1802. 1807

This and the other Poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-end, Grasmere, during the earlier part of my residence there. I have been censured for the last line but one — "thy function apostolical" — as being little less than profane. How could it be



thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,  
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
 And all the long year through the heir  
 Of joy or sorrow;  
 Methinks that there abides in thee  
 Some concord with humanity,  
 Given to no other flower I see  
 The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
 A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,  
 Does little on his memory rest,  
 Or on his reason,  
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find  
 A shelter under every wind,  
 A hope for times that are unkind  
 And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
 With friends to greet thee, or without,  
 Yet pleased and willing;  
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
 And all things suffering from all  
 Thy function apostolical  
 In peace fulfilling.

### THE GREEN LINNET

1803. 1807

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
 With brightest sunshine round me spread  
 Of spring's unclouded weather,  
 In this sequestered nook how sweet  
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!  
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
 My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
 In all this covert of the blest:  
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
 In joy of voice and pinion!  
 Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
 Dost lead the revels of the May;  
 And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
 Make all one band of paramours,  
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
 Art sole in thy employment:  
 A life, a Presence like the Air,  
 Scattering thy gladness without care,  
 Too blest with any one to pair;  
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,  
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
 Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
 Yet seeming still to hover;  
 There! where the flutter of his wings  
 Upon his back and body flings  
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
 A Brother of the dancing leaves;  
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves  
 Pours forth his song in gushes;  
 As if by that exulting strain  
 He mocked and treated with disdain  
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,  
 While fluttering in the bushes.

### YEW-TREES

1803. 1815

Written at Grasmere. These yew-trees are still standing, but the spread of that at Lorton is much diminished by mutilation. I will here mention that a little way up the hill, on the road leading from Rosthwaite to Stonethwaite (in Borrowdale), lay the trunk of a yew-tree, which appeared as you approached, so vast was its diameter, like the entrance of a cave, and not a small one. Calculating upon what I have observed of the slow growth of this tree in rocky situations, and of its durability, I have often thought that the one I am describing must have been as old as the Christian era. The tree lay in the line of a fence. Great masses of its ruins were strewn about, and some had been rolled down the hillside and lay near the road at the bottom. As you approached the tree, you were struck with the number of shrubs and young plants, ashes, etc., which had found a bed upon the decayed trunk and grew to no inconsiderable height, forming, as it were, a part of the hedgerow. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude, as it must have stood. By the bye, Hutton, the old Guide, of Keswick, had been so im-

pressed with the remains of this tree, that he used gravely to tell strangers that there could be no doubt of its having been in existence before the flood.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the midst

Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore;  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that crossed  
the sea

And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.

Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree! a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;

Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of  
note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;  
Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a  
growth

Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;  
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks  
That threaten the profane;—a pillared  
shade,

Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown  
hue,

By sheddings from the pining umbrage  
tinged

Perennially — beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked  
With unrejoicing berries — ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide; Fear and trembling  
Hope,

Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton  
And Time the Shadow;—there to celebrate,

As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone, 30  
United worship; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

"WHO FANCIED WHAT A  
PRETTY SIGHT"

1803. 1807

WHO fancied what a pretty sight  
This Rock would be if edged around

With living snow-drops? circlet bright!  
How glorious to this orchard-ground!  
Who loved the little Rock, and set  
Upon its head this coronet?

Was it the humour of a child?  
Or rather of some gentle maid,  
Whose brows, the day that she was styled  
The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed?  
Of man mature, or matron sage?  
Or old man toying with his age?

I asked — 't was whispered; The device  
To each and all might well belong:  
It is the Spirit of Paradise  
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,  
That gives to all the self-same bent  
Where life is wise and innocent.

"IT IS NO SPIRIT WHO FROM  
HEAVEN HATH FLOWN"

1803. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I remember the instant my sister, S. H., called me to the window of our Cottage, saying, "Look how beautiful is yon star! It has the sky all to itself." I composed the verses immediately.

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,  
And is descending on his embassy;  
Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens  
to espy!

'T is Hesperus — there he stands with glittering crown,

First admonition that the sun is down!  
For yet it is broad day-light: clouds pass  
by;

A few are near him still — and now the sky,  
He hath it to himself — 't is all his own.

O most ambitious Star! an inquest wrought  
Within me when I recognised thy light;

A moment I was startled at the sight:  
And, while I gazed, there came to me a  
thought

That I might step beyond my natural race  
As thou seem'st now to do; might one day  
trace

Some ground not mine; and, strong her  
strength above,

My Soul, an Apparition in the place,  
Tread there with steps that no one shall  
reprove!

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

1803

Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and myself started together from Town-end to make a tour in Scotland. Poor Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection; and he departed from us, as is recorded in my Sister's Journal, soon after we left Loch Lomond. The verses that stand foremost among these Memorials were not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."

## I

DEPARTURE FROM THE VALE  
OF GRASMERE

AUGUST 1803

1803. 1827

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian  
plains

Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;  
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies  
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,  
Methinks 't would heighten joy, to overleap  
At will the crystal battlements, and peep  
Into some other region, though less fair,  
To see how things are made and managed  
there.

Change for the worse might please, incur-  
sion bold

Into the tracts of darkness and of cold; 10  
O'er Limbo lake with æry flight to steer,  
And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.  
Such animation often do I find,  
Power in my breast, wings growing in my  
mind,

Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,  
Perchance without one look behind me cast.  
Some barrier with which Nature, from the  
birth

Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on  
earth.

O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign  
Such happy fields, abodes so calm as  
thine; 20

Not like an outcast with himself at strife;  
The slave of business, time, or care for  
life,

But moved by choice; or, if constrained in  
part,

Yet still with Nature's freedom at the  
heart;—

To cull contentment upon wildest shores,  
And luxuries extract from bleakest moors;  
With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,  
And having rights in all that we behold.

— Then why these lingering steps? — A  
bright adieu,  
For a brief absence, proves that love is  
true; 30  
Ne'er can the way be irksome or for-  
lorn  
That winds into itself for sweet return.

## II

## AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

1803. 1845

For illustration, see my Sister's Journal. It  
may be proper to add that the second of these  
pieces, though *felt* at the time, was not com-  
posed till many years after.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold:  
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold,  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear?  
As if it were thyself that's here  
I shrink with pain; 10  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! — away  
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to  
stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay  
The tribute due  
To him, and aught that hides his clay  
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth  
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth, 20

Rose like a star that touching earth,  
For so it seems,  
Doth glorify its humble birth  
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
The struggling heart, where be they  
now? —

Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave. 30

I mourned with thousands, but as one  
More deeply grieved, for He was gone  
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,  
And showed my youth  
How Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,  
Regret pursues and with it blends, —  
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends  
By Skiddaw seen, — 40  
Neighbours we were, and loving friends  
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;  
But heart with heart and mind with mind,  
Where the main fibres are entwined,  
Through Nature's skill,  
May even by contraries be joined  
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;  
Thou "poor Inhabitant below," 50  
At this dread moment — even so —  
Might we together  
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,  
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been  
placed  
Within my reach; of knowledge graced  
By fancy what a rich repast!  
But why go on? —  
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,  
His grave grass-grown. 60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)  
Lies gathered to his Father's side,  
Soul-moving sight!  
Yet one to which is not denied  
Some sad delight:

For he is safe, a quiet bed  
Hath early found among the dead,  
Harboured where none can be misled,  
Wronged, or distressed; 70  
And surely here it may be said  
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
May He who halloweth the place  
Where Man is laid  
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere  
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear, 80  
Music that sorrow comes not near,  
A ritual hymn,  
Chaunted in love that casts out fear  
By Seraphim.

## III

## THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON  
THE BANKS OF NITH, NEAR THE POET'S  
RESIDENCE

1803 1845

Too frail to keep the lofty vow  
That must have followed when his brow  
Was wreathed — "The Vision" tells us  
how —  
With holly spray,  
He faltered, drifted to and fro,  
And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister,  
throng  
Our minds when, lingering all too long,  
Over the grave of Burns we hung  
In social grief — 10  
Indulged as if it were a wrong  
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme  
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,  
And prompt to welcome every gleam  
Of good and fair,  
Let us beside this limpid Stream  
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight;  
Think rather of those moments bright 20

When to the consciousness of right  
 His course was true,  
 When Wisdom prospered in his sight  
 And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,  
 Freely as in youth's season bland,  
 When side by side, his Book in hand,  
 We went to stray,  
 Our pleasure varying at command  
 Of each sweet Lay.

30

How oft inspired must he have trod  
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road !  
 There lurks his home; in that Abode,  
 With mirth elate,  
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood,  
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,  
 Before it humbly let us pause,  
 And ask of Nature, from what cause  
 And by what rules  
 She trained her Burns to win applause  
 That shames the Schools.

40

Through busiest street and loneliest glen  
 Are felt the flashes of his pen;  
 He rules 'mid winter snows, and when  
 Bees fill their hives;  
 Deep in the general heart of men  
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime  
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,  
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme  
 From genuine springs,  
 Shall dwell together till old Time  
 Folds up his wings ?

50

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven  
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;  
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven  
 With vain endeavour,  
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,  
 Effaced for ever.

60

But why to Him confine the prayer,  
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings  
 bear  
 On the frail heart the purest share  
 With all that live ? —  
 The best of what we do and are,  
 Just God, forgive !

## IV

## TO THE SONS OF BURNS

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR  
 FATHER

1803. 1807

"The Poet's grave is in a corner of the church-yard. We looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses —

"'Is there a man whose judgment clear,' etc."

*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Traveller.*

'Mid crowded obelisks and urns  
 I sought the untimely grave of Burns;  
 Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns  
 With sorrow true;  
 And more would grieve, but that it turns  
 Trembling to you !

Through twilight shades of good and ill  
 Ye now are panting up life's hill,  
 And more than common strength and skill  
 Must ye display;  
 If ye would give the better will  
 Its lawful sway.

10

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear  
 Intemperance with less harm, beware !  
 But if the Poet's wit ye share,  
 Like him can speed  
 The social hour — of tenfold care  
 'There will be need;

For honest men delight will take  
 To spare your failings for his sake,  
 Will flatter you, — and fool and rake  
 Your steps pursue;  
 And of your Father's name will make  
 A snare for you.

20

Far from their noisy haunts retire,  
 And add your voices to the quire  
 That sanctify the cottage fire  
 With service meet;  
 There seek the genius of your Sire,  
 His spirit greet;

30

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"  
 He paid to Nature tuneless vows;  
 Or wiped his honourable brows  
 Bedewed with toil,  
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs  
 Upturned the soil;

His judgment with benignant ray  
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;  
 But ne'er to a seductive lay  
     Let faith be given; 40  
 Nor deem that "light which leads astray,  
     Is light from Heaven."

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;  
 Be independent, generous, brave;  
 Your Father such example gave,  
     And such revere;  
 But be admonished by his grave,  
     And think, and fear!

## V

## TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

1803. 1807

This delightful creature and her demeanour  
 are particularly described in my Sister's Journal. The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realised; and now, approaching the close of my 73d year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded. She is alluded to in the Poem of "The Three Cottage Girls" among my Continental Memorials. In illustration of this class of poems I have scarcely anything to say beyond what is anticipated in my Sister's faithful and admirable Journal.

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
 Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
 Twice seven consenting years have shed  
 Their utmost bounty on thy head:  
 And these grey rocks; that household  
     lawn;

Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
 This fall of water that doth make  
 A murmur near the silent lake;  
 This little bay; a quiet road  
 That holds in shelter thy Abode — 10  
 In truth together do ye seem  
 Like something fashioned in a dream;  
 Such Forms as from their covert peep  
 When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
 But, O fair Creature! in the light  
 Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
 I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,  
 I bless thee with a human heart;  
 God shield thee to thy latest years!  
 Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers; 20  
 And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
 For thee when I am far away:  
 For never saw I mien, or face,•  
 In which more plainly I could trace  
 Benignity and home-bred sense  
 Ripening in perfect innocence.  
 Here scattered, like a random seed,  
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
 The embarrassed look of shy distress, 30  
 And maidenly shamefacedness:  
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
 The freedom of a Mountaineer:  
 A face with gladness overspread!  
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!  
 And seemliness complete, that sways  
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays;  
 With no restraint, but such as springs  
 From quick and eager visitings  
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach 40  
 Of thy few words of English speech:  
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
 That gives thy gestures grace and life!  
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind —  
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull  
 For thee who art so beautiful?  
 O happy pleasure! here to dwell  
 Beside thee in some heathy dell; 50  
 Adopt thy homely ways, and dress,  
 A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!  
 But I could frame a wish for thee  
 More like a grave reality:  
 Thou art to me but as a wave  
 Of the wild sea; and I would have  
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
 Though but of common neighbourhood.  
 What joy to hear thee, and to see!  
 Thy elder Brother I would be, 60  
 Thy Father — anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its  
     grace  
 Hath led me to this lonely place.  
 Joy have I had; and going hence  
 I bear away my recompense.  
 In spots like these it is we prize  
 Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:  
 Then, why should I be loth to stir?  
 I feel this place was made for her;  
 To give new pleasure like the past, 70  
 Continued long as life shall last.  
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,  
 Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part:  
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
 As fair before me shall behold,

As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;  
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

## VI

## GLEN-ALMAIN

OR, THE NARROW GLEN

1803. 1807

IN this still place, remote from men,  
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;  
In this still place, where murmurs on  
But one meek streamlet, only one:  
He sang of battles, and the breath  
Of stormy war, and violent death;  
And should, methinks, when all was past,  
Have rightfully been laid at last  
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent  
As by a spirit turbulent; <sup>10</sup>  
Where sights were rough, and sounds were  
wild,

And everything unreconciled;  
In some complaining, dim retreat,  
For fear and melancholy meet;  
But this is calm; there cannot be  
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?  
Or is it but a groundless creed ?  
What matters it ? — I blame them not  
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot <sup>20</sup>  
Was moved; and in such way expressed  
Their notion of its perfect rest.  
A convent, even a hermit's cell,  
Would break the silence of this Dell:  
It is not quiet, is not ease;  
But something deeper far than these:  
The separation that is here  
Is of the grave; and of austere  
Yet happy feelings of the dead:  
And, therefore, was it rightly said <sup>30</sup>  
That Ossian, last of all his race !  
Lies buried in this lonely place.

## VII

## STEPPING WESTWARD

1803. 1807

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walk-  
ing by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine  
evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut

where, in the course of our Tour, we had been  
hospitably entertained some weeks before, we  
met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary  
region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom  
said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are  
stepping westward ?"

"What, you are stepping westward ?" —  
"Yea."

— "T would be a *wildish* destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance:  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold;  
And stepping westward seemed to be  
A kind of *heavenly* destiny:  
I liked the greeting; 't was a sound  
Of something without place or bound;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right  
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native lake:  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy:  
Its power was felt; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought <sup>20</sup>  
Of travelling through the world that lay  
Before me in my endless way.

## VIII

## THE SOLITARY REAPER

1803. 1807

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass !  
Reaping and singing by herself;  
Stop here, or gently pass !  
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain;  
O listen ! for the Vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt <sup>10</sup>  
More welcome notes to weary bands  
Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
Among Arabian sands:

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago: 20  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang  
As if her song could have no ending;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending; —  
I listened, motionless and still;  
And, as I mounted up the hill 30  
The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more.

## IX

ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE,  
UPON LOCH AWE

1803. 1827

The first three lines were thrown off at the moment I first caught sight of the Ruin from a small eminence by the wayside; the rest was added many years after.

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view, — a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water, — mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately — not dismantled of turrets — nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin." — *Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream  
Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest  
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age;  
Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds  
are caught  
Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.

Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers  
there are  
That touch each other to the quick in  
modes  
Which the gross world no sense hath to  
perceive,  
No soul to dream of. What art Thou,  
from care  
Cast off — abandoned by thy rugged Sire, 10  
Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in  
place  
And in dimension, such that thou might'st  
seem  
But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,  
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills  
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered  
harm;)  
Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims  
To reverence, suspends his own; submit-  
ting  
All that the God of Nature hath conferred,  
All that he holds in common with the stars,  
To the memorial majesty of Time 20  
Impersonated in thy calm decay!  
Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unre-  
proved!  
Now, while a farewell gleam of evening  
light  
Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,  
Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule  
Over the pomp and beauty of a scene  
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and  
woods, unite  
To pay thee homage; and with these are  
joined,  
In willing admiration and respect,  
Two Hearts, which in thy presence might  
be called 30  
Youthful as Spring. — Shade of departed  
Power,  
Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,  
The chronicle were welcome that should  
call  
Into the compass of distinct regard  
The toils and struggles of thy infant years!  
Yon foaming flood seems motionless as  
ice;  
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,  
Frozen by distance; so, majestic Pile,  
To the perception of this Age, appear  
Thy fierce beginnings, softened and sub-  
dued 40  
And quieted in character — the strife,  
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,  
Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades!



## X

## ROB ROY'S GRAVE

1803. 1807

I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy. If so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely, that of a well-educated Lady who lived at the head of the Lake, within a mile or less of the point indicated as containing the remains of One so famous in the neighbourhood.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,  
The English ballad-singer's joy !  
And Scotland has a thief as good,  
An outlaw of as daring mood;  
She has her brave ROB ROY !  
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,  
And let us chant a passing stave,  
In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart  
And wondrous length and strength of arm;  
Nor craved he more to quell his foes, 11  
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave;  
Forgive me if the phrase be strong; —  
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy  
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave;  
As wise in thought as bold in deed:  
For in the principles of things  
He sought his moral creed. 20

Said generous Rob, "What need of books ?  
Burn all the statutes and their shelves:  
They stir us up against our kind;  
And worse, against ourselves.

"We have a passion — make a law,  
Too false to guide us or control !  
And for the law itself we fight  
In bitterness of soul.

"And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose  
Distinctions that are plain and few: 30  
These find I graven on my heart:  
That tells me what to do.

"The creatures see of flood and field,  
And those that travel on the wind !  
With them no strife can last; they live  
In peace, and peace of mind.

"For why ? — because the good old rule  
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,  
That they should take, who have the power,  
And they should keep who can. 40

"A lesson that is quickly learned,  
A signal this which all can see !  
Thus nothing here provokes the strong  
To wanton cruelty.

"All freakishness of mind is checked;  
He tamed, who foolishly aspires;  
While to the measure of his might  
Each fashions his desires.

"All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall  
By strength of prowess or of wit: 50  
'T is God's appointment who must sway,  
And who is to submit.

"Since, then, the rule of right is plain,  
And longest life is but a day;  
To have my ends, maintain my rights,  
I 'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,  
Through summer heat and winter snow:  
The Eagle, he was lord above,  
And Rob was lord below. 60

So was it — *would*, at least, have been  
But through untowardness of fate;  
For Polity was then too strong —  
He came an age too late;

Or shall we say an age too soon ?  
For, were the bold Man living *now*,  
How might he flourish in his pride,  
With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,  
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains, 70  
Would all have seemed but paltry things,  
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,  
To these few meagre Vales confined;  
But thought how wide the world, the times  
How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said,  
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact  
From land to land through half the earth !  
Judge thou of law and fact ! 80

"T is fit that we should do our part,  
Becoming, that mankind should learn  
That we are not to be surpassed  
In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,  
Of good things none are good enough : —  
We'll show that we can help to frame  
A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings that take  
From me the sign of life and death : 90  
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,  
Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,  
As *might* have been, then, thought of joy !  
France would have had her present Boast,  
And we our own Rob Roy !

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;  
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave !  
Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all  
Here standing by thy grave. 100

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,  
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !  
Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love  
The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live  
With us who now behold the light,  
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,  
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,  
The poor man's heart, the poor man's  
hand ; 110  
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,  
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh  
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays  
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,  
And by Loch Lomond's braes !

And, far and near, through vale and hill,  
Are faces that attest the same ;  
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,  
At sound of ROB ROY's name. 120

## XI SONNET

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE

1803. 1807

The Castle here mentioned was *Nidpath*  
near Peebles. The person alluded to was the  
then Duke of Queensbury. The fact was told  
me by Walter Scott.

DEGENERATE Douglas ! oh, the unworthy  
Lord !  
Whom mere despite of heart could so far  
please,  
And love of havoc, (for with such disease  
Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth  
word  
To level with the dust a noble horde,  
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,  
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like  
these,  
Beggared and outraged ! — Many hearts  
deplored  
The fate of those old Trees ; and oft with  
pain  
The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze  
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems  
to heed :  
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and  
bays,  
And the pure mountains, and the gentle  
Tweed,  
And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

## XII YARROW UNVISITED

1803. 1807

See the various Poems the scene of which is  
laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particu-  
lar, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton begin-  
ning

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,  
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow ! —"

FROM Stirling castle we had seen  
The mazy Forth unravelled ;  
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,  
And with the Tweed had travelled ;

And when we came to Clovenford,  
Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"  
"Whate'ems betide, we'll turn aside,  
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,  
Who have been buying, selling, 10  
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;  
Each maiden to her dwelling!  
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,  
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!  
But we will downward with the Tweed,  
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,  
Both lying right before us;  
And Dryborough, where with chiming  
Tweed  
The lintwhites sing in chorus; 20  
There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land  
Made blithe with plough and harrow:  
Why throw away a needful day  
To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,  
That glides the dark hills under?  
There are a thousand such elsewhere  
As worthy of your wonder."  
— Strange words they seemed of slight and  
scorn

My True-love sighed for sorrow; 30  
And looked me in the face, to think  
I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,  
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!  
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,  
But we will leave it growing.  
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,  
We'll wander Scotland thorough;  
But, though so near, we will not turn  
Into the dale of Yarrow. 40

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;  
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
Float double, swan and shadow!  
We will not see them; will not go,  
To-day, nor yet to-morrow,  
Enough if in our hearts we know  
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!  
It must, or we shall rue it: 50  
We have a vision of our own;  
Ah! why should we undo it?

The treasured dreams of times long past,  
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!  
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,  
'T will be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come,  
And wandering seem but folly, —  
Should we be loth to stir from home,  
And yet be melancholy; 60  
Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
'T will soothe us in our sorrow,  
That earth has something yet to show,  
The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

## XIII

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH  
AND HER HUSBAND

1803. 1807

At Jedborough, my companion and I went  
into private lodgings for a few days; and  
the following Verses were called forth by  
the character and domestic situation of our  
Hostess.

AGE! twine thy brows with fresh spring  
flowers,

And call a train of laughing Hours;  
And bid them dance, and bid them sing;  
And thou, too, mingle in the ring!  
Take to thy heart a new delight;  
If not, make merry in despite

That there is One who scorns thy power: —  
But dance! for under Jedborough Tower,  
A Matron dwells who, though she bears  
The weight of more than seventy years, 10  
Lives in the light of youthful glee,  
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay! start not at that Figure — there!  
Him who is rooted to his chair!

Look at him — look again! for he  
Hath long been of thy family.  
With legs that move not, if they can,  
And useless arms, a trunk of man,  
He sits, and with a vacant eye;  
A sight to make a stranger sigh! 20  
Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom:  
His world is in this single room:  
Is this a place for mirthful cheer?  
Can merry-making enter here?

The joyous Woman is the Mate  
Of him in that forlorn estate!  
He breathes a subterraneous damp;  
But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:

He is as mute as Jedborough Tower:  
 She jocund as it was of yore,  
 With all its bravery on; in times  
 When all alive with merry chimes,  
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,  
 It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron! and thy due  
 Is praise, heroic praise, and true!  
 With admiration I behold  
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:  
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present  
 The picture of a life well spent:  
 This do I see; and something more;  
 A strength unthought of heretofore!  
 Delighted am I for thy sake;  
 And yet a higher joy partake:  
 Our Human-nature throws away  
 Its second twilight, and looks gay;  
 A land of promise and of pride  
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah! see her helpless Charge! enclosed  
 Within himself it seems, composed;  
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,  
 The strife of happiness and pain,  
 Utterly dead! yet in the guise  
 Of little infants, when their eyes  
 Begin to follow to and fro  
 The persons that before them go,  
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow,  
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail  
 Where common cheerfulness would fail;  
 She strikes upon him with the heat  
 Of July suns; he feels it sweet;  
 An animal delight though dim!  
 'T is all that now remains for him!

The more I looked, I wondered more —  
 And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,  
 Some inward trouble suddenly  
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye —  
 A remnant of uneasy light,  
 A flash of something over-bright!  
 Nor long this mystery did detain  
 My thoughts; — she told in pensive strain  
 That she had borne a heavy yoke,  
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke;  
 Ill health of body; and had pined  
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it! — but let praise ascend  
 To Him who is our lord and friend!  
 Who from disease and suffering  
 Hath called for thee a second spring;  
 Repaid thee for that sore distress  
 By no untimely joyousness;  
 Which makes of thine a blissful state;  
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

## XIV

“FLY, SOME KIND HARBINGER,  
 TO GRASMERE-DALE!”

1803. 1815

This was actually composed the last day of  
 our tour between Dalston and Grasmere.

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-  
 dale!

Say that we come, and come by this day's  
 light;

Fly upon swiftest wing round field and  
 height,

But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale;

There let a mystery of joy prevail,

The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,

And Rover whine, as at a second sight

Of near-approaching good that shall not  
 fail:

And from that Infant's face let joy appear;

Yea, let our Mary's one companion child —

That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled

With intimations manifold and dear,

While we have wandered over wood and  
 wild —

Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

## XV

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER  
 RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRASMERE

1803. 1807

The story was told me by George Mackereth,  
 for many years parish-clerk of Grasmere. He  
 had been an eye-witness of the occurrence. The  
 vessel in reality was a washing-tub, which the  
 little fellow had met with on the shore of  
 the Loch.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,  
 Have romped enough, my little Boy!  
 Jane hangs her head upon my breast,  
 And you shall bring your stool and rest;  
 This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see  
 That you can listen quietly:  
 And, as I promised, I will tell  
 That strange adventure which befell  
 A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland Boy* ! — why call him so ?  
Because, my Darlings, ye must know  
That, under hills which rise like towers,  
Far higher hills than these of ours !  
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight,  
The sun, the day; the stars, the night;  
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,  
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,  
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,  
Nor had a melancholy mind;  
For God took pity on the Boy,  
And was his friend; and gave him joy  
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above  
Her other children him did love:  
For, was she here, or was she there,  
She thought of him with constant care,  
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when, clad  
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,  
And bonnet with a feather gay,  
To Kirk he on the Sabbath day  
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog, too, had he; not for need,  
But one to play with and to feed;  
Which would have led him, if bereft  
Of company or friends, and left  
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow —  
And thus from house to house would go;  
And all were pleased to hear and see,  
For none made sweeter melody  
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream;  
Both when he heard the eagles scream,  
And when he heard the torrents roar,  
And heard the water beat the shore  
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,  
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood;  
But one of mighty size, and strange;  
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,  
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,  
The great Sea-water finds its way

Through long, long windings of the hills  
And drinks up all the pretty rills  
And rivers large and strong: 60

Then hurries back the road it came —  
Returns, on errand still the same;  
This did it when the earth was new;  
And this for evermore will do  
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,  
Come boats and ships that safely ride  
Between the woods and lofty rocks;  
And to the shepherds with their flocks  
Bring tales of distant lands. 70

And of those tales, whate'er they were,  
The blind Boy always had his share;  
Whether of mighty towns, or vales  
With warmer suns and softer gales,  
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,  
When from the water-side he heard  
The shouting, and the jolly cheers;  
The bustle of the mariners  
In stillness or in storm. 80

But what do his desires avail ?  
For He must never handle sail;  
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float  
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,  
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,  
What sin would be upon her head  
If she should suffer this: " My Son,  
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;  
The danger is so great." 90

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side  
Still sounding with the sounding tide,  
And heard the billows leap and dance,  
Without a shadow of mischance,  
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,  
Ye soon shall know how this befell)  
He in a vessel of his own,  
On the swift flood is hurrying down,  
Down to the mighty Sea. 100

In such a vessel never more  
May human creature leave the shore !  
If this or that way he should stir,

Woe to the poor blind Mariner !  
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ? — Ye have seen  
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,  
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;  
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,  
Are brought in ships from far. 110

Such gifts had those seafaring men  
Spread round that haven in the glen;  
Each hut, perchance, might have its own,  
And to the Boy they all were known —  
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell  
Which he, poor Child, had studied well;  
A shell of ample size, and light  
As the pearly ear of Amphitrite,  
That sportive dolphins drew. 120

And, as a Coracle that braves  
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,  
This shell upon the deep would swim,  
And gaily lift its fearless brim  
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew:  
And he a story strange yet true  
Had heard, how in a shell like this  
An English Boy, O thought of bliss !  
Had stoutly launched from shore; 130

Launched from the margin of a bay  
Among the Indian isles, where lay  
His father's ship, and had sailed far —  
To join that gallant ship of war,  
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited  
The house that held this prize; and, led  
By choice or chance, did thither come  
One day when no one was at home,  
And found the door unbarred. 140

While there he sate, alone and blind,  
That story flashed upon his mind; —  
A bold thought roused him, and he took  
The shell from out its secret nook,  
And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel, — and in pride  
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,  
Stepped into it — his thoughts all free  
As the light breezes that with glee  
Sang through the adventurer's hair. 149

A while he stood upon his feet;  
He felt the motion — took his seat;  
Still better pleased as more and more  
The tide retreated from the shore,  
And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.  
How rapidly the Child is driven !  
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,  
He thus had gone, ere he was seen  
By any human eye. 160

But when he was first seen, oh me  
What shrieking and what misery !  
For many saw; among the rest  
His Mother, she who loved him best,  
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,  
It is the triumph of his joy !  
The bravest traveller in balloon,  
Mounting as if to reach the moon,  
Was never half so blessed. 170

And let him, let him go his way,  
Alone, and innocent, and gay !  
For, if good Angels love to wait  
On the forlorn unfortunate,  
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,  
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,  
The cries which broke from old and young  
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,  
Are stifled — all is still. 180

And quickly with a silent crew  
A boat is ready to pursue;  
And from the shore their course they take,  
And swiftly down the running lake  
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace;  
So have ye seen the fowler chase  
On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast  
A youngling of the wild-duck's nest  
With deftly-lifted oar; 190

Or as the wily sailors crept  
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)  
The hapless creature which did dwell  
Erewhile within the dancing shell,  
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,  
They follow, more and more afraid,

More cautious as they draw more near;  
But in his darkness he can hear,  
And guesses their intent. 200

"*Lei-gha — Lei-gha*" — he then cried out,  
"*Lei-gha — Lei-gha*" — with eager shout;  
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,  
And what he meant was, "Keep away,  
And leave me to myself!"

Alas! and when he felt their hands ——  
You've often heard of magic wands,  
That with a motion overthrow  
A palace of the proudest show,  
Or melt it into air: 210

So all his dreams — that inward light  
With which his soul had shone so bright —  
All vanished; — 't was a heartfelt cross  
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,  
As he had ever known.

But hark! a gratulating voice,  
With which the very hills rejoice:  
'T is from the crowd, who tremblingly  
Have watched the event, and now can  
see  
That he is safe at last. 220

And then, when he was brought to land,  
Full sure they were a happy band,  
Which, gathering round, did on the banks

Of that great Water give God thanks,  
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart  
The blind Boy's little dog took part;  
He leapt about, and oft did kiss  
His master's hands in sign of bliss,  
With sound like lamentation. 230

But most of all, his Mother dear,  
She who had fainted with her fear,  
Rejoiced when waking she espies  
The Child; when she can trust her eyes,  
And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,  
When he was in the house again:  
Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;  
She kissed him — how could she chastise?  
She was too happy far. 240

Thus, after he had fondly braved  
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved;  
And, though his fancies had been wild,  
Yet he was pleased and reconciled  
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell  
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell  
And long the story will repeat  
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,  
And how he was preserved. 250

## OCTOBER 1803

1803. 1807

ONE might believe that natural miseries  
Had blasted France, and made of it a land  
Unfit for men; and that in one great band  
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at  
ease.

But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and  
breeze

Shed gentle favours: rural works are there,  
And ordinary business without care;  
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and  
please!

How piteous then that there should be such  
dearth

Of knowledge; that whole myriads should  
unite

To work against themselves such fell de-  
spite:

Should come in phrensy and in drunken  
mirth,

Impatient to put out the only light  
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth!

"THERE IS A BONDAGE WORSE,  
FAR WORSE, TO BEAR"

1803. 1807

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to  
bear

Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor,  
and wall,

Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:

'T is his who walks about in the open air,  
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear  
Their fetters in their souls. For who could  
be,

Who, even the best, in such condition, free

From self-reproach, reproach that he must share  
 With Human-nature? Never be it ours  
 To see the sun how brightly it will shine,  
 And know that noble feelings, manly powers,  
 Instead of gathering strength, must droop  
 and pine;  
 And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers  
 Fade, and participate in man's decline.

OCTOBER 1803

1803. 1807

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay:  
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air  
 With words of apprehension and despair:  
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,  
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day  
 And minds not stinted or untitled are given,  
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,  
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.  
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith  
 That every gift of noble origin  
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath;  
 That virtue and the faculties within  
 Are vital, — and that riches are akin  
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

“ENGLAND! THE TIME IS COME  
 WHEN THOU SHOULD'ST WEAN”

1803. 1807

ENGLAND! the time is come when thou  
 should'st wean  
 Thy heart from its emasculating food;  
 The truth should now be better understood;  
 Old things have been unsettled; we have  
 seen  
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have  
 been  
 But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,  
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,  
 Aught good were destined, thou would'st  
 step between.  
 England! all nations in this charge agree:  
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,

Far — far more abject, is thine Enemy:  
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though  
 the freight  
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight:  
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all  
 with Thee!

OCTOBER 1803

1803. 1807

WHEN, looking on the present face of things,  
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too!  
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,  
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,  
 The great events with which old story rings  
 Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing great:  
 Nothing is left which I can venerate;  
 So that a doubt almost within me springs  
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length  
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great  
 God!  
 I measure back the steps which I have trod:  
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the  
 strength  
 Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts  
 sublime  
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

TO THE MEN OF KENT

OCTOBER 1803

1803. 1807

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,  
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance  
 Her haughty brow against the coast of  
 France,  
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment!  
 To France be words of invitation sent!  
 They from their fields can see the counte-  
 nance  
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering  
 lance  
 And hear you shouting forth your brave  
 intent.  
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,  
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath;  
 Confirmed the charters that were yours  
 before; —  
 No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;  
 We all are with you now from shore to  
 shore: —  
 Ye men of Kent, 't is victory or death!



## IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY

1803. 1807

An invasion being expected, October 1803.

SIX thousand veterans practised in war's  
game,  
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed  
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,  
Shepherds and herdsman. — Like a whirl-  
wind came  
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like  
flame;  
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-  
road,  
Was stopped, and could not breathe be-  
neath the load  
Of the dead bodies. — 'T was a day of shame  
For them whom precept and the pedantry  
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.  
O for a single hour of that Dundee,  
Who on that day the word of onset gave !  
Like conquest would the Men of England  
see;  
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

## ANTICIPATION, OCTOBER 1803

1803. 1807

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won !  
On British ground the Invaders are laid  
low;  
The breath of Heaven has drifted them  
like snow,  
And left them lying in the silent sun,  
Never to rise again ! — the work is done.  
Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful  
show  
And greet your sons ! drums beat and  
trumpets blow !  
Make merry, wives ! ye little children,  
stun  
Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your  
noise !  
Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine  
must be  
That triumph, when the very worst, the  
pain,  
And even the prospect of our brethren  
slain,  
Hath something in it which the heart  
enjoys : —  
In glory will they sleep and endless sanc-  
tity.

LINES ON THE EXPECTED  
INVASION, 1803

1803. 1845

COME ye — who, if (which Heaven avert !)  
the Land  
Were with herself at strife, would take  
your stand,  
Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's  
side,  
And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your  
pride —  
Come ye — who, not less zealous, might  
display  
Banners at enmity with regal sway,  
And, like the Pymys and Miltons of that day,  
Think that a State would live in sounder  
health  
If Kingship bowed its head to Common-  
wealth —  
Ye too — whom no discreditable fear  
Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless  
tear,  
Uncertain what to choose and how to  
steer —  
And ye — who might mistake for sober  
sense  
And wise reserve the plea of indolence —  
Come ye — whate'er your creed — O waken  
all,  
Whate'er your temper, at your Country's  
call;  
Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)  
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,  
Or save this honoured Land from every  
Lord  
But British reason and the British sword.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY  
VALE

1803. 1815

The character of this man was described to me, and the incident upon which the verses turn was told me, by Mr. Pool of Nether Stowey, with whom I became acquainted through our common friend, S. T. Coleridge. During my residence at Alfoxden I used to see much of him and had frequent occasions to admire the course of his daily life, especially his conduct to his labourers and poor neighbours: their virtues he carefully encouraged, and weighed their faults in the scales of charity. If I seem in these verses to have treated the weaknesses of the farmer, and his transgression, too ten-

derly, it may in part be ascribed to my having received the story from one so averse to all harsh judgment. After his death, was found in his eseritoir a lock of grey hair carefully preserved, with a notice that it had been cut from the head of his faithful shepherd, who had served him for a length of years. I need scarcely add that he felt for all men as his brothers. He was much beloved by distinguished persons — Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Southey, Sir H. Davy, and many others; and in his own neighbourhood was highly valued as a magistrate, a man of business, and in every other social relation. The latter part of the poem, perhaps, requires some apology as being too much of an echo to the "Reverie of Poor Susan."

'T is not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,  
The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,  
And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,  
That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town;  
His staff is a sceptre — his grey hairs a crown;  
And his bright eyes look brighter, set off by the streak  
Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn, —  
'mid the joy  
Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy,  
That countenance there fashioned, which, spite of a stain  
That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was; and his house far and near  
Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer:  
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale  
Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his mild ale!

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,  
His fields seemed to know what their Master was doing:

And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow,  
and lea,  
All caught the infection — as geigerous as he.<sup>19</sup>

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl, —  
The fields better suited the ease of his soul:  
He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,  
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought; and the poor,  
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door:  
He gave them the best that he had; or, to say  
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm:  
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm:  
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,<sup>30</sup>  
His means are run out, — he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went, — all were free with their money;  
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey,  
That they dreamt not of dearth; — He continued his rounds,  
Knocked here — and knocked there, pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,  
And something, it might be, reserved for himself:  
Then (what is too true) without hinting a word,  
Turned his back on the country — and off like a bird.<sup>40</sup>

You lift up your eyes! — but I guess that you frame  
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame;  
In him it was scarcely a business of art,  
For this he did all in the ease of his heart.

To London — a sad emigration I ween —  
With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the green;

And there, with small wealth but his legs  
and his hands,  
As lonely he stood as a crow on the  
sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam as-  
sume, —  
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter,  
and groom; <sup>50</sup>  
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,  
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in  
his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green  
and is stout;  
Twice as fast as before does his blood run  
about;  
You would say that each hair of his beard  
was alive,  
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely  
goes  
About work that he knows, in a track that  
he knows;  
But often his mind is compelled to demur,  
And you guess that the more then his body  
must stir. <sup>60</sup>

In the throng of the town like a stranger is  
he,  
Like one whose own country's far over the  
sea;  
And Nature, while through the great city  
he hies,  
Full ten times a day takes his heart by  
surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is  
young,  
More of soul in his face than of words on  
his tongue;  
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and  
sighs,  
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parch-  
ing heats?  
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over  
the streets; <sup>70</sup>  
With a look of such earnestness often will  
stand,  
You might think he'd twelve reapers at  
work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate  
hours  
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits  
and her flowers,  
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have  
made  
Poor winter look fine in such strange  
masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of  
straw,  
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can  
draw;  
With a thousand soft pictures his memory  
will teem,  
And his hearing is touched with the sounds  
of a dream. <sup>80</sup>

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his  
way,  
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells  
at the hay;  
He thinks of the fields he so often hath  
mown,  
And is happy as if the rich freight were his  
own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to re-  
pair, —  
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with  
him there.  
The breath of the cows you may see him  
inhale,  
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury  
Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou  
art laid,  
May one blade of grass spring up over thy  
head; <sup>90</sup>  
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it  
be,  
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves  
of a tree.

## TO THE CUCKOO

1804. 1807

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Gras-  
mere.

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice.  
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass  
Thy twofold shout I hear,  
From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,  
Of sunshine and of flowers,  
Thou bringest unto me a tale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing,  
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days  
I listened to; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways  
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee!

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF  
DELIGHT"

1804. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious.

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and  
smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

"I WANDERED LONELY AS A  
CLOUD"

1804. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

## THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

1804. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son.

## I

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?  
Oh find me, prosperous or undone !  
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
Why am I ignorant of the same  
That I may rest; and neither blame  
Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

## II

Seven years, alas ! to have received  
No tidings of an only child;  
To have despaired, have hoped, believed, 10  
And been for evermore beguiled;  
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !  
I catch at them, and then I miss;  
Was ever darkness like to this ?

## III

He was among the prime in worth,  
An object beauteous to behold;  
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth  
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:  
If things ensued that wanted grace,  
As hath been said, they were not base; 20  
And never blush was on my face.

## IV

Ah ! little doth the young one dream,  
When full of play and childish cares,  
What power is in his wildest scream,  
Heard by his mother unawares !  
He knows it not, he cannot guess:  
Years to a mother bring distress;  
But do not make her love the less.

## V

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long  
From that ill thought; and, being blind, 30  
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong;  
Kind mother have I been, as kind  
As ever breathed:" and that is true;  
I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
Weeping for him when no one knew.

## VI

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
Hopeless of honour and of gain,  
Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door;  
Think not of me with grief and pain:  
I now can see with better eyes; 40  
And worldly grandeur I despise,  
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

## VII

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,  
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;  
They mount — how short a voyage brings  
The wanderers back to their delight !  
Chains tie us down by land and sea;  
And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
All that is left to comfort thee.

## VIII

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan, 50  
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;  
Or thou upon a desert thrown  
Inheritest the lion's den;  
Or hast been summoned to the deep,  
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep  
An incommunicable sleep.

## IX

I look for ghosts; but none will force  
Their way to me: 't is falsely said  
That there was ever intercourse  
Between the living and the dead; 60  
For, surely, then I should have sight  
Of him I wait for day and night,  
With love and longings infinite.

## X

My apprehensions come in crowds;  
I dread the rustling of the grass;  
The very shadows of the clouds  
Have power to shake me as they pass:  
I question things and do not find  
One that will answer to my mind;  
And all the world appears unkind. 70

XI

Beyond participation lie  
My troubles, and beyond relief:  
If any chance to heave a sigh,  
They pity me, and not my grief.  
Then come to me, my Son, or send  
Some tidings that my woes may end;  
I have no other earthly friend !

THE FORSAKEN

1804. 1845

This was an overflow from the "Affliction of Margaret —," and was excluded as superfluous there, but preserved in the faint hope that it may turn to account by restoring a shy lover to some forsaken damsel. My poetry has been complained of as deficient in interests of this sort, — a charge which the piece beginning, "Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live," will scarcely tend to obviate. The natural imagery of these verses was supplied by frequent, I might say intense, observation of the Rydal torrent. What an animating contrast is the ever-changing aspect of that, and indeed of every one of our mountain brooks, to the monotonous tone and unmitigated fury of such streams among the Alps as are fed all the summer long by glaciers and melting snows. A traveller observing the exquisite purity of the great rivers, such as the Rhine at Geneva, and the Reuss at Lucerne, when they issue out of their respective lakes, might fancy for a moment that some power in nature produced this beautiful change, with a view to make amends for those Alpine sulliyings which the waters exhibit near their fountain heads; but, alas! how soon does that purity depart before the influx of tributary waters that have flowed through cultivated plains and the crowded abodes of men.

THE peace which others seek they find;  
The heaviest storms not longest last;  
Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind  
An amnesty for what is past;  
When will my sentence be reversed ?  
I only pray to know the worst;  
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle ! silent years  
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;  
And yet they leave it short, and fears  
And hopes are strong and will prevail.  
My calmest faith escapes not pain;  
And, feeling that the hope is vain,  
I think that he will come again.

REPENTANCE

A PASTORAL BALLAD

1804. 1820

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by the conversation of our next neighbour, Margaret Ashburner.

THE fields which with covetous spirit we  
sold,  
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the  
day,  
Would have brought us more good than a  
burthen of gold,  
Could we but have been as contented as  
they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us,  
said I,  
"Let him come, with his purse proudly  
grasped in his hand;  
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan, — we'll  
die  
Before he shall go with an inch of the  
land !"

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their  
bowers;  
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide; 10  
We could do what we liked with the land,  
it was ours;  
And for us the brook murmured that ran  
by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late;  
And often, like one overburthened with sin,  
With my hand on the latch of the half-  
opened gate,  
I look at the fields, but I cannot go in !

When I walk by the hedge on a bright  
summer's day,  
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's  
tree,  
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,  
"What ails you, that you must come creep-  
ing to me !"

With our pastures about us, we could not  
be sad;  
Our comfort was near if we ever were  
cross;  
But the comfort, the blessings, and wealth  
that we had,  
We slighted them all, — and our birth-right  
was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son  
Who must now be a wanderer ! but peace  
to that strain !

Think of evening's repose when our labour  
was done,  
The sabbath's return, and its leisure's soft  
chain !

And in sickness, if night had been sparing  
of sleep,  
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I  
stood, <sup>30</sup>  
Looking down on the kine, and our treasure  
of sheep  
That besprinkled the field; 't was like youth  
in my blood !

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as a  
snail;  
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with  
a sigh,  
That follows the thought — We 've no land  
in the vale,  
Save six feet of earth where our forefathers  
lie !

### THE SEVEN SISTERS

OR, THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE

1804. 1807

#### I

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,  
All children of one mother:  
You could not say in one short day  
What love they bore each other.  
A garland, of seven lilies, wrought !  
Seven Sisters that together dwell;  
But he, bold Knight as ever fought,  
Their Father, took of them no thought,  
He loved the wars so well.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully, <sup>10</sup>  
The solitude of Binnorie !

#### II

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,  
And from the shores of Erin,  
Across the wave, a Rover brave  
To Binnorie is steering:  
Right onward to the Scottish strand  
The gallant ship is borne;  
The warriors leap upon the land,  
And hark ! the Leader of the band  
Hath blown his bugle horn. <sup>20</sup>

Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

#### III

Beside a grotto of their own,  
With boughs above them closing,  
The Seven are laid, and in the shade  
They lie like fawns reposing.  
But now, upstarting with affright  
At noise of man and steed,  
Away they fly to left, to right —  
Of your fair household, Father-knight, <sup>30</sup>  
Methinks you take small heed !  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

#### IV

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,  
And, over hill and hollow,  
With menace proud, and insult loud,  
The youthful Rovers follow.  
Cried they, " Your Father loves to roam:  
Enough for him to find  
The empty house when he comes home; <sup>40</sup>  
For us your yellow ringlets comb,  
For us be fair and kind !"  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

#### V

Some close behind, some side to side,  
Like clouds in stormy weather;  
They run, and cry, " Nay, let us die,  
And let us die together."  
A lake was near; the shore was steep;  
There never foot had been; <sup>50</sup>  
They ran, and with a desperate leap  
Together plunged into the deep,  
Nor ever more were seen.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

#### VI

The stream that flows out of the lake,  
As through the glen it rambles,  
Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,  
For those seven lovely Campbells. <sup>60</sup>  
Seven little Islands, green and bare,  
Have risen from out the deep:  
The fishers say, those sisters fair,  
By faeries all are buried there,  
And there together sleep.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT  
DAUGHTER, DORA

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A  
MONTH OLD THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16

1804. 1815

— HAST thou then survived —  
Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,  
Meek Infant ! among all forlornest things  
The most forlorn — one life of that bright  
star,  
The second glory of the Heavens ? — Thou  
hast,  
Already hast survived that great decay,  
That transformation through the wide earth  
felt,  
And by all nations. In that Being's sight  
From whom the Race of human kind pro-  
ceed,  
A thousand years are but as yesterday; 10  
And one day's narrow circuit is to Him  
Not less capacious than a thousand years.  
But what is time ? What outward glory ?  
neither  
A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend  
Through "heaven's eternal year." — Yet  
hail to Thee,  
Frail, feeble Monthling ! — by that name,  
methinks,  
Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out  
Not idly. — Hadst thou been of Indian birth,  
Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,  
And rudely canopied by leafy boughs, 20  
Or to the churlish elements exposed  
On the blank plains, — the coldness of the  
night,  
Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful  
face  
Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,  
Would, with imperious admonition, then  
Have scored thine age, and punctually  
timed  
Thine infant history, on the minds of those  
Who might have wandered with thee. —  
Mother's love,  
Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,  
Will, among us warm-clad and warmly  
housed, 30  
Do for thee what the finger of the heavens  
Doth all too often harshly execute  
For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds  
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace  
The affections, to exalt them or refine;  
And the maternal sympathy itself,

Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless  
tie  
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.  
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !  
Even now — to solemnise thy helpless state,  
And to enliven in the mind's regard 41  
Thy passive beauty — parallels have risen,  
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,  
Within the region of a father's thoughts,  
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.  
And first; — thy sinless progress, through a  
world  
By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,  
Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered  
clouds,  
Moving untouched in silvery purity,  
And cheering oft-times their reluctant  
gloom. 50  
Fair are ye both, and both are free from  
stain:  
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy  
horn  
With brightness ! leaving her to post along,  
And range about, disquieted in change,  
And still impatient of the shape she wears.  
Once up, once down the hill, one journey,  
Babe,  
That will suffice thee; and it seems that  
now  
Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is  
thine;  
Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st  
In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon  
Hath this conception, grateful to behold, 61  
Changed countenance, like an object sullied  
o'er  
By breathing mist; and thine appears  
to be  
A mournful labour, while to her is given  
Hope, and a renovation without end.  
— That smile forbids the thought; for on  
thy face  
Smiles are beginning, like the beams of  
dawn,  
To shoot and circulate; smiles have there  
been seen,  
Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports  
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers  
Thy loneliness: or shall those smiles be  
called 71  
Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore  
This untried world, and to prepare thy  
way  
Through a strait passage intricate and  
dim ?



Such are they; and the same are tokens,  
 signs,  
 Which, when the appointed season hath  
 arrived,  
 Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt;  
 And Reason's godlike Power be proud to  
 own.

### THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

1804. 1807

Seen at Town-end, Grasmere. The elder-  
 bush has long since disappeared: it hung over  
 the wall near the Cottage; and the Kitten con-  
 tinued to leap up, catching the leaves as here  
 described. The infant was Dora.

THAT way look, my Infant, lo !  
 What a pretty baby-show !  
 See the Kitten on the wall,  
 Sporting with the leaves that fall,  
 Withered leaves — one — two — and three —  
 From the lofty elder-tree !  
 Through the calm and frosty air  
 Of this morning bright and fair,  
 Eddying round and round they sink  
 Softly, slowly: one might think,  
 From the motions that are made,  
 Every little leaf conveyed  
 Sylph or Faery hither tending, —  
 To this lower world descending,  
 Each invisible and mute,  
 In his wavering parachute.  
 — But the Kitten, how she starts,  
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts !  
 First at one, and then its fellow  
 Just as light and just as yellow;  
 There are many now — now one —  
 Now they stop and there are none.  
 What intenseness of desire  
 In her upward eye of fire !  
 With a tiger-leap half-way  
 Now she meets the coming prey,  
 Lets it go as fast, and then  
 Has it in her power again:  
 Now she works with three or four,  
 Like an Indian conjurer;  
 Quick as he in feats of art,  
 Far beyond in joy of heart.  
 Were her antics played in the eye  
 Of a thousand standers-by,  
 Clapping hands with shout and stare,  
 What would little Tabby care  
 For the plaudits of the crowd ?

Over happy to be proud,  
 Over wealthy in the treasure  
 Of her own exceeding pleasure !  
 'T is a pretty baby-treat;  
 Nor, I deem, for me unmeet;  
 Here, for neither Babe nor me,  
 Other play-mate can I see.  
 Of the countless living things,  
 That with stir of feet and wings  
 (In the sun or under shade,  
 Upon bough or grassy blade)  
 And with busy revellings,  
 Chirp and song, and murmurings,  
 Made this orchard's narrow space,  
 And this vale so blithe a place;  
 Multitudes are swept away  
 Never more to breathe the day:  
 Some are sleeping; some in bands  
 Travelled into distant lands;  
 Others slunk to moor and wood,  
 Far from human neighbourhood;  
 And, among the Kinds that keep  
 With us closer fellowship,  
 With us openly abide,  
 All have laid their mirth aside.  
 Where is he that giddy Sprite,  
 Blue-cap, with his colours bright,  
 Who was blest as bird could be,  
 Feeding in the apple-tree;  
 Made such wanton spoil and rout,  
 Turning blossoms inside out;  
 Hung — head pointing towards the ground —  
 Fluttered, perched, into a round  
 Bound himself, and then unbound;  
 Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin !  
 Prettiest Tumbler ever seen !  
 Light of heart and light of limb;  
 What is now become of Him ?  
 Lambs, that through the mountains went  
 Frisking, bleating merriment,  
 When the year was in its prime,  
 They are sobered by this time.  
 If you look to vale or hill,  
 If you listen, all is still,  
 Save a little neighbouring rill,  
 That from out the rocky ground  
 Strikes a solitary sound.  
 Vainly glitter hill and plain,  
 And the air is calm in vain;  
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure  
 Of a sky serene and pure;  
 Creature none can she decoy  
 Into open sign of joy:  
 Is it that they have a fear  
 Of the dreary season near ?

Or that other pleasures be  
 Sweeter even than gaiety?  
 Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell  
 In the impenetrable cell  
 Of the silent heart which Nature  
 Furnishes to every creature;  
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know  
 Too sedate for outward show,  
 Such a light of gladness breaks,  
 Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks, —  
 Spreads with such a living grace  
 O'er my little Dora's face;  
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms  
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
 That almost I could repine  
 That your transports are not mine,  
 That I do not wholly fare  
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair!  
 And I will have my careless season  
 Spite of melancholy reason,  
 Will walk through life in such a way  
 That, when time brings on decay,  
 Now and then I may possess  
 Hours of perfect gladness.  
 — Pleased by any random toy;  
 By a kitten's busy joy,  
 Or an infant's laughing eye  
 Sharing in the ecstasy;  
 I would fare like that or this,  
 Find my wisdom in my bliss;  
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
 And have faculties to take,  
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
 Matter for a jocund thought,  
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
 To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

## TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND

(AN AGRICULTURIST)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING  
TOGETHER IN HIS PLEASURE-GROUND

1804. 1807

This person was Thomas Wilkinson, a quaker by religious profession; by natural constitution of mind, or shall I venture to say, by God's grace, he was something better. He had inherited a small estate, and built a house upon it near Yanwath, upon the banks of the Emont. I have heard him say that his heart used to beat, in his boyhood, when he heard the sound of a drum and fife. Nevertheless, the spirit of enterprise in him confined itself to tilling his

ground, and conquering such obstacles as stood in the way of its fertility. Persons of his religious persuasion do now, in a far greater degree than formerly, attach themselves to trade and commerce. He kept the old track. As represented in this poem, he employed his leisure hours in shaping pleasant walks by the side of his beloved river, where he also built something between a hermitage and a summer-house, attaching to it inscriptions after the manner of Shenstone at his Leasowes. He used to travel from time to time, partly from love of nature, and partly with religious friends in the service of humanity. His admiration of genius in every department did him much honour. Through his connection with the family in which Edmund Burke was educated, he became acquainted with that great man, who used to receive him with great kindness and consideration; and many times have I heard Wilkinson speak of those interesting interviews. He was honoured also by the friendship of Elizabeth Smith, and of Thomas Clarkson and his excellent wife, and was much esteemed by Lord and Lady Lonsdale, and every member of that family. Among his verses (he wrote many) are some worthy of preservation — one little poem in particular upon disturbing, by prying curiosity, a bird while hatching her young in his garden. The latter part of this innocent and good man's life was melancholy. He became blind, and also poor by becoming surety for some of his relations. He was a bachelor. He bore, as I have often witnessed, his calamities with unfailing resignation. I will only add that, while working in one of his fields, he unearthed a stone of considerable size, then another, then two more, and, observing that they had been placed in order as if forming the segment of a circle, he proceeded carefully to uncover the soil, and brought into view a beautiful Druid's temple of perfect though small dimensions. In order to make his farm more compact, he exchanged this field for another; and, I am sorry to add, the new proprietor destroyed this interesting relic of remote ages for some vulgar purpose.

SPADE! with which Wilkinson hath tilled  
 his lands,  
 And shaped these pleasant walks by  
 Emont's side,  
 Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;  
 I press thee through the yielding soil, with  
 pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;  
 Long hast Thou served a man to reason  
 true;

Whose life combines the best of high and  
low,  
The labouring many and the resting few;

Health, meekness, arldour, quietness se-  
cure,  
And industry of body and of mind; 10  
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure  
As nature is; too pure to be refined.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing  
In concord with his river murmuring by;  
Or in some silent field, while timid spring  
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has  
laid  
Low in the darksome cell thine own dear  
lord?  
That man will have a trophy, humble  
Spade! 19  
A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part  
False praise from true, or, greater from  
the less,  
Thee will he welcome to his hand and  
heart,  
Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome  
day—  
Thee his loved servant, his inspiring mate!  
And, when thou art past service, worn  
away,  
No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;  
An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou  
be:— 30  
High will he hang thee up, well pleased to  
adorn  
His rustic chimney with the last of Thee!

### THE SMALL CELANDINE

1804. 1807

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,  
That shrinks, like many more, from cold  
and rain;  
And, the first moment that the sun may  
shine,  
Bright as the sun himself, 't is out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm  
on swarm,  
Or blasts the green field and the trees  
distrest,  
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,  
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I  
passed  
And recognised it, though an altered form,  
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,  
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered  
voice,  
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the  
cold:  
This neither is its courage nor its choice,  
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the  
dew;  
It cannot help itself in its decay;  
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of  
hue."  
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was  
grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favourite — then, worse  
truth,  
A Miser's Pensioner — behold our lot!  
O Man, that from thy fair and shining  
youth  
Age might but take the things Youth  
needed not!

### AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK

1804. 1842

This place was presented to me by Sir George Beaumont with a view to the erection of a house upon it, for the sake of being near to Coleridge, then living, and likely to remain, at Greta Hall near Keswick. The *severe* necessities that prevented this arose from his domestic situation. This little property, with a considerable addition that still leaves it very small, lies beautifully upon the banks of a rill that gurgles down the side of Skiddaw, and the orchard and other parts of the grounds command a magnificent prospect of Derwent Water, and of the mountains of Borrowdale and Newlands. Many years ago I gave the place to my daughter.

BEAUMONT ! it was thy wish that I should rear

A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,  
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I might dwell

In neighbourhood with One to me most dear,

That undivided we from year to year  
Might work in our high Calling — a bright hope

To which our fancies, mingling, gave free scope

Till checked by some necessities severe.  
And should these slacken, honoured BEAUMONT ! still

Even then we may perhaps in vain implore  
Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfil.

Whether this boon be granted us or not,  
Old Skiddaw will look down upon the Spot  
With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

### TO THE SUPREME BEING

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO

1804. 1807

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed

If Thou the spirit give by which I pray:  
My unassisted heart is barren clay,  
That of its native self can nothing feed:

Of good and pious works thou art the seed,  
That quickens only where thou say'st it may:

Unless Thou show to us thine own true way  
No man can find it: Father ! Thou must lead.

Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts  
into my mind

By which such virtue may in me be bred  
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread;  
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,  
That I may have the power to sing of thee,  
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

### ODE TO DUTY

1805. 1807

This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode to Fortune. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been,

from hour to hour, from day to day : I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us.

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !

O Duty ! if that name thou love  
Who art a light to guide, a rod  
To check the erring, and reprove;  
Thou, who art victory and law  
When empty terrors overawe;  
From vain temptations dost set free;  
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye  
Be on them; who, in love and truth, 10  
Where no misgiving is, rely  
Upon the genial sense of youth:  
Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot  
Who do thy work, and know it not:  
Oh ! if through confidence misplaced  
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power !  
around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,  
When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security. 20  
And they a blissful course may hold  
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
Live in the spirit of this creed;  
Yet seek thy firm support, according to  
their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;  
No sport of every random gust,  
Yet being to myself a guide,  
Too blindly have reposed my trust:  
And oft, when in my heart was heard 30  
Thy timely mandate, I deferred  
The task, in smoother walks to stray;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly,  
if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
I supplicate for thy control;  
But in the quietness of thought:

Me this unchartered freedom tires;  
 I feel the weight of chance-desires:  
 My hopes no more must change their name,  
 I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
 The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
 Nor know we anything so fair  
 As is the smile upon thy face:  
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
 And the most ancient heavens, through  
 Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!  
 I call thee: I myself commend 50  
 Unto thy guidance from this hour;  
 Oh, let my weakness have an end!  
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
 The spirit of self-sacrifice;  
 The confidence of reason give;  
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman let  
 me live!

## TO A SKY-LARK

1805. 1807

UP with me! up with me into the clouds!  
 For thy song, Lark, is strong;  
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds!  
 Singing, singing,  
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing,  
 Lift me, guide me till I find  
 That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary  
 And to-day my heart is weary;  
 Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10  
 Up to thee would I fly.  
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine  
 In that song of thine;  
 Lift me, guide me high and high  
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning  
 Thou art laughing and scorning;  
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,  
 And, though little troubled with sloth,  
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth 20  
 To be such a traveller as I.  
 Happy, happy Liver,  
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river  
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
 Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must  
 wind;

But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30  
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's  
 day is done.

## FIDELITY

1805. 1807

The young man whose death gave occasion  
 to this poem was named Charles Gough, and  
 had come early in the spring to Paterdale for  
 the sake of angling. While attempting to  
 cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere he slipped  
 from a steep part of the rock where the ice  
 was not thawed, and perished. His body was  
 discovered as is told in this poem. Walter  
 Scott heard of the accident, and both he and  
 I, without either of us knowing that the other  
 had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem  
 in admiration of the dog's fidelity. His con-  
 tains a most beautiful stanza:—

"How long didst thou think that his silence was slum-  
 ber,  
 When the wind waved his garment how oft didst thou  
 start."

I will add that the sentiment in the last four  
 lines of the last stanza in my verses was uttered  
 by a shepherd with such exactness, that a  
 traveller, who afterwards reported his account  
 in print, was induced to question the man  
 whether he had read them, which he had not.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,  
 A cry as of a dog or fox;  
 He halts — and searches with his eyes  
 Among the scattered rocks:  
 And now at distance can discern  
 A stirring in a brake of fern;  
 And instantly a dog is seen,  
 Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed;  
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy; 10  
 With something, as the Shepherd thinks,  
 Unusual in its cry:  
 Nor is there any one in sight  
 All round, in hollow or on height;  
 Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;  
 What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,  
 That keeps, till June, December's snow;

A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn below !  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land;  
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere;  
Thither the rainbow comes — the cloud —  
And mists that spread the flying shroud; 30  
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,  
That, if it could, would hurry past;  
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while  
The Shepherd stood; then makes his way  
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog  
As quickly as he may;  
Nor far had gone before he found  
A human skeleton on the ground;  
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh 40  
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks  
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !  
At length upon the Shepherd's mind  
It breaks, and all is clear:  
He instantly recalled the name,  
And who he was, and whence he came;  
Remembered, too, the very day  
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake 50  
This lamentable tale I tell !  
A lasting monument of words  
This wonder merits well.  
The Dog which still was hovering nigh,  
Repeating the same timid cry,  
This Dog had been through three months' space  
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day  
When this ill-fated Traveller died,  
The Dog had watched about the spot, 60  
Or by his master's side:  
How nourished here through such long time  
He knows, who gave that love sublime;  
And gave that strength of feeling, great  
Above all human estimate !

## INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG  
1805. 1807

This Dog I knew well. It belonged to Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, who then lived at Sockburn on the Tees, a beautiful retired situation where I used to visit him and his sisters before my marriage. My sister and I spent many months there after our return from Germany in 1799.

On his morning rounds the Master  
Goes to learn how all things fare;  
Searches pasture after pasture,  
Sheep and cattle eyes with care;  
And, for silence or for talk,  
He hath comrades in his walk;  
Four dogs, each pair a different breed,  
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started !  
— Off they fly in earnest chase; 10  
Every dog is eager-hearted,  
All the four are in the race:  
And the hare whom they pursue,  
Knows from instinct what to do;  
Her hope is near: no turn she makes;  
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted  
Thinly by a one night's frost;  
But the nimble Hare hath trusted  
To the ice, and safely crost; 20  
She hath crost, and without heed  
All are following at full speed,  
When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,  
Breaks — and the greyhound, DART, is over-  
head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW —  
See them cleaving to the sport !  
Music has no heart to follow,  
Little MUSIC, she stops short.  
She hath neither wish nor heart,  
Hers is now another part: 30  
A loving creature she, and brave !  
And fondly strives her struggling friend to  
save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,  
Very hands as you would say !  
And afflicting moans she fetches,  
As he breaks the ice away.

For herself she hath no fears, —  
 Him alone she sees and hears, —  
 Makes efforts with complainings; nor gives  
     o'er 39  
 Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more.

## TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG

1805. 1807

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,  
 Beneath a covering of the common earth !  
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,  
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise;  
 More thou deserv'st; but *this* man gives to  
     man,  
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.  
 Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee  
     dear  
 Shall find thee through all changes of the  
     year:  
 This Oak points out thy grave; the silent  
     tree  
 Will gladly stand a monument of thee. 10  
     We grieved for thee, and wished thy end  
     were past;  
 And willingly have laid thee here at last:  
 For thou hadst lived till everything that  
     cheers  
 In thee had yielded to the weight of years;  
 Extreme old age had wasted thee away,  
 And left thee but a glimmering of the day:  
 Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy  
     knees, —  
 I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,  
 Too weak to stand against its sportive  
     breath,  
 And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.  
 It came, and we were glad; yet tears were  
     shed; 21  
 Both man and woman wept when thou wert  
     dead;  
 Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,  
 Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst  
     thy share;  
 But for some precious boons vouchsafed to  
     thee,  
 Found scarcely anywhere in like degree !  
 For love, that comes wherever life and sense  
 Are given by God, in thee was most intense;  
 A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,  
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind 30  
 Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:

Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw  
 A soul of love, love's intellectual law: —  
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;  
 Our tears from passion and from reason  
     came,  
 And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured  
     name !

"WHEN TO THE ATTRACTIONS  
OF THE BUSY WORLD"

1805. 1815

The grove still exists, but the plantation has  
 been walled in, and is not so accessible as when  
 my brother John wore the path in the manner  
 here described. The grove was a favourite  
 haunt with us all while we lived at Town-end.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,  
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen  
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,  
 Sharp season followed of continual storm  
 In deepest winter; and, from week to week,  
 Pathway, and lane, and public road, were  
     clogged  
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a  
     hill  
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands  
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont 10  
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof  
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place  
 Of refuge, with an unnumbered floor.  
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,  
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,  
 The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I  
     loth  
 To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds  
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,  
 Hither repaired. — A single beech-tree grew  
 Within this grove of firs ! and, on the fork  
 Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's  
     nest; 20  
 A last year's nest, conspicuously built  
 At such small elevation from the ground  
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that  
     house  
 Of nature and of love had made their home  
 Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long  
 Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,  
 A few sheep, stragglers from some moun-  
     tain-flock,  
 Would watch my motions with suspicious  
     stare,  
 From the remotest outskirts of the grove, —

Some nook where they had made their final  
stand,<sup>30</sup>  
Huddling together from two fears—the  
fear  
Of me and of the storm. Full many an  
hour  
Here did I lose. But in this grove the  
trees  
Had been so thickly planted, and had  
thriven  
In such perplexed and intricate array;  
That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems  
A length of open space, where to and fro  
My feet might move without concern or  
care;  
And, baffled thus, though earth from day  
to day  
Was fettered, and the air by storm dis-  
turbed,<sup>40</sup>  
I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and  
prized,  
Less than I wished to prize, that calm  
recess.  
The snows dissolved, and genial Spring  
returned  
To clothe the fields with verdure. Other  
haunts  
Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright  
April day,  
By chance retiring from the glare of noon  
To this forsaken covert, there I found  
A hoary pathway traced between the trees,  
And winding on with such an easy line  
Along a natural opening, that I stood<sup>50</sup>  
Much wondering how I could have sought  
in vain  
For what was now so obvious. To abide,  
For an allotted interval of ease,  
Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come  
From the wild sea a cherished Visitant;  
And with the sight of this same path—  
begun,  
Begun and ended, in the shady grove,  
Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind  
That, to this opportune recess allured,  
He had surveyed it with a finer eye,<sup>60</sup>  
A heart more wakeful; and had worn the  
track  
By pacing here, unwearied and alone,  
In that habitual restlessness of foot  
That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and  
o'er  
His short domain upon the vessel's deck,  
While she pursues her course through the  
dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's  
pleasant shore,  
And taken thy first leave of those green  
hills  
And rocks that were the play-ground of thy  
youth,  
Year followed year, my Brother! and we  
two,<sup>70</sup>  
Conversing not, knew little in what mould  
Each other's mind was fashioned; and at  
length,  
When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,  
Between us there was little other bond  
Than common feelings of fraternal love.  
But thou, a Schoolboy, to the sea hadst  
carried  
Undying recollections! Nature there  
Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she  
still  
Was with thee; and even so didst thou  
become  
A *silent* Poet; from the solitude<sup>80</sup>  
Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful  
heart  
Still couchant, an inevitable ear,  
And an eye practised like a blind man's  
touch.  
— Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone;  
Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours  
Could I withhold thy honoured name,—  
and now  
I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.  
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns  
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and  
strong;  
And there I sit at evening, when the steep  
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful  
lake,<sup>91</sup>  
And one green island, gleam between the  
stems  
Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!  
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle  
Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like  
sight  
Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,  
My Brother, and on all which thou hast  
lost.  
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,  
Muttering the verses which I muttered first  
Among the mountains, through the mid-  
night watch<sup>100</sup>  
Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck  
In some far region, here, while o'er my  
head,  
At every impulse of the moving breeze,



The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like  
 sound,  
 Alone I tread this path;—for aught I  
 know,  
 Timing my steps to thine; and, with a  
 store  
 Of undistinguishable sympathies,  
 Mingling most earnest wishes for the day  
 When we, and others whom we love, shall  
 meet  
 A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale. 110

## ELEGIAC VERSES

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN  
 WORDSWORTH,

COMMANDER OF THE E. I. COMPANY'S SHIP THE  
 EARL OF ABERGAVENNY, IN WHICH HE PER-  
 IShed BY CALAMITOUS SHIPWRECK, FEB. 6,  
 1805

1805. 1845

Composed near the Mountain track that  
 leads from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes,  
 where it descends towards Paterdale.

"Here did we stop; and here looked round,  
 While each into himself descends."

The point is two or three yards below the  
 outlet of Grisdale tarn, on a foot-road by  
 which a horse may pass to Paterdale—a ridge  
 of Helvellyn on the left, and the summit of  
 Fairfield on the right.

## I

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo !  
 That instant, startled by the shock,  
 The Buzzard mounted from the rock  
 Deliberate and slow:  
 Lord of the air, he took his flight;  
 Oh ! could he on that woeful night  
 Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,  
 For one poor moment's space to Thee,  
 And all who struggled with the Sea,  
 When safety was so near. 10

## II

Thus in the weakness of my heart  
 I spoke (but let that pang be still)  
 When rising from the rock at will,  
 I saw the Bird depart.  
 And let me calmly bless the Power  
 That meets me in this unknown Flower.  
 Affecting type of him I mourn !  
 With calmness suffer and believe,  
 And grieve, and know that I must grieve,  
 Not cheerless, though forlorn. 20

## III

Here did we stop; and here looked round  
 While each into himself descends,  
 For that last thought of parting Friends  
 That is not to be found.  
 Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,  
 Our home and his, his heart's delight,  
 His quiet heart's selected home.  
 But time before him melts away,  
 And he hath feeling of a day  
 Of blessedness to come. 30

## IV

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,  
 Taught that the mutual hope was dust,  
 In sorrow, but for higher trust,  
 How miserably deep !  
 All vanished in a single word,  
 A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard:  
 Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so  
 it came,

The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;  
 He who had been our living John  
 Was nothing but a name. 40

## V

That was indeed a parting ! oh,  
 Glad am I, glad that it is past;  
 For there were some on whom it cast  
 Unutterable woe.  
 But they as well as I have gains;—  
 From many a humble source, to pains  
 Like these, there comes a mild release;  
 Even here I feel it, even this Plant  
 Is in its beauty ministrant  
 To comfort and to peace. 50

## VI

He would have loved thy modest grace,  
 Meek Flower ! To Him I would have said,  
 "It grows upon its native bed  
 Beside our Parting-place;  
 There, cleaving to the ground, it lies  
 With multitude of purple eyes,  
 Spangling a cushion green like moss;  
 But we will see it, joyful tide !  
 Some day, to see it in its pride,  
 The mountain will we cross." 60

## VII

— Brother and Friend, if verse of mine  
 Have power to make thy virtues known,  
 Here let a monumental Stone  
 Stand—sacred as a Shrine;

And to the few who pass this way,  
 Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,  
 Long as these mighty rocks endure, -  
 Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,  
 Although deserving of all good,  
 On any earthly hope, however pure !

70

## TO THE DAISY

1805. 1815

SWEET Flower ! belike one day to have  
 A place upon thy Poet's grave,  
 I welcome thee once more;  
 But He, who was on land, at sea,  
 My Brother, too, in loving thee,  
 Although he loved more silently,  
 Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day  
 When to that Ship he bent his way,  
 To govern and to guide: 10  
 His wish was gained: a little time  
 Would bring him back in manhood's prime  
 And free for life, these hills to climb;  
 With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day  
 While that stout Ship at anchor lay  
 Beside the shores of Wight;  
 The May had then made all things green;  
 And, floating there, in pomp serene,  
 That Ship was goodly to be seen, 20  
 His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought  
 The tender peace of rural thought:  
 In more than happy mood  
 To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !  
 He then would steal at leisure hours,  
 And loved you glittering in your bowers  
 A starry multitude.

But hark the word ! — the ship is gone; —  
 Returns from her long course: — anon 30  
 Sets sail: — in season due,  
 Once more on English earth they stand:  
 But, when a third time from the land  
 They parted, sorrow was at hand  
 For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel ! — ghastly shock !  
 — At length delivered from the rock,  
 The deep she hath regained;  
 And through the stormy night they steer;  
 Labouring for life, in hope and fear, 40

To reach a safer shore — how near,  
 Yet not to be attained !

“ Silence ! ” the brave Commander cried:  
 To that calm word a shriek replied,  
 It was the last death-shriek.  
 — A few (my soul oft sees that sight)  
 Survive upon the tall mast's height;  
 But one dear remnant of the night —  
 For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea 50  
 He lay in slumber quietly;  
 Unforced by wind or wave  
 To quit the Ship for which he died,  
 (All claims of duty satisfied;)  
 And there they found him at her side;  
 And bore him to the grave.

Vain service ! yet not vainly done  
 For this, if other end were none,  
 That He, who had been cast  
 Upon a way of life unmeet 60  
 For such a gentle Soul and sweet,  
 Should find an undisturbed retreat  
 Near what he loved, at last —

That neighbourhood of grove and field  
 To Him a resting-place should yield,  
 A meek man and a brave !  
 The birds shall sing and ocean make  
 A mournful murmur for *his* sake;  
 And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and  
 wake  
 Upon his senseless grave. 70

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE  
 CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR  
 GEORGE BEAUMONT

1805. 1807

Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures  
 of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs.  
 Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it;  
 but Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir  
 George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale  
 Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged  
 Pile !

Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of  
 thee:

I saw thee every day; and all the while  
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !  
 So like, so very like, was day to day !  
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
 there;  
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no  
 sleep;  
 No mood, which season takes away, or  
 brings:  
 I could have fancied that the mighty Deep  
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's  
 hand,  
 To express what then I saw; and add the  
 gleam,  
 The light that never was, on sea or land,  
 The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary  
 Pile

Amid a world how different from this !  
 Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;  
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-  
 house divine  
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —  
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
 The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,  
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,  
 Such Picture would I at that time have  
 made: 30

And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
 A stedfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 't is so no  
 more;

I have submitted to a new control:  
 A power is gone, which nothing can re-  
 store;  
 A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold  
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been:  
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;  
 This, which I know, I speak with mind  
 serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have  
 been the Friend,  
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
 This work of thine I blame not, but com-  
 mend;  
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 't is a passionate Work ! — yet wise and  
 well,  
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here;  
 That Hulk which labours in the deadly  
 swell,  
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sub-  
 lime,  
 I love to see the look with which it braves, 49  
 Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,  
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and tram-  
 pling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives  
 alone,  
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
 Kind !

Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
 Is to be pitied; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,  
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne !  
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
 here. — 59  
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

## LOUISA

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A  
 MOUNTAIN EXCURSION

1805. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

I MET LOUISA in the shade,  
 And, having seen that lovely Maid,  
 Why should I fear to say  
 That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,  
 And down the rocks can leap along  
 Like rivulets in May ?

She loves her fire, her cottage-home;  
 Yet o'er the moorland will she roam  
 In weather rough and bleak;  
 And, when against the wind she strains,  
 Oh ! might I kiss the mountain rains  
 That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"  
If I with her but half a noon  
May sit beneath the walls  
Of some old cave, or mossy nook,  
When up she winds along the brook  
To hunt the waterfalls.

TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAK-  
ING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

1805. 1807

Composed at the same time and on the same  
view as "I met Louisa in the shade": indeed  
they were designed to make one piece.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !  
— There is a nest in a green dale,  
A harbour and a hold;  
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see  
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be  
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
And treading among flowers of joy  
Which at no season fade,  
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,  
Shalt show us how divine a thing  
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,  
A melancholy slave;  
But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA

1805. 1820

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Faithfully  
narrated, though with the omission of many  
pathetic circumstances, from the mouth of a  
French lady, who had been an eye-and-ear-wit-  
ness of all that was done and said. Many long  
years after, I was told that Duplignè was then  
a monk in the Convent of La Trappe.

The following tale was written as an Episode,  
in a work from which its length may perhaps  
exclude it. The facts are true; no invention  
as to these has been exercised, as none was  
needed.

O HAPPY time of youthful lovers (thus  
My story may begin) O balmy time,  
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow  
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !  
To such inheritance of blessed fancy  
(Fancy that sports more desperately with  
minds

Than ever fortune hath been known to do)  
The high-born Vaudracour was brought,  
by years

Whose progress had a little overstepped  
His stripling prime. A town of small re-  
pute,

Among the vine-clad mountains of Au-  
vergne,

Was the Youth's birth-place. There he  
wooed a Maid

Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit  
With answering vows. Plebeian was the  
stock,

Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,  
From which her graces and her honours  
sprung:

And hence the father of the enamoured  
Youth,

With haughty indignation, spurned the  
thought

Of such alliance. — From their cradles up,  
With but a step between their several  
homes,

Twins had they been in pleasure; after  
strife

And petty quarrels, had grown fond again;  
Each other's advocate, each other's stay;  
And, in their happiest moments, not con-  
tent,

If more divided than a sportive pair  
Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are  
hovering

Within the eddy of a common blast,  
Or hidden only by the concave depth  
Of neighbouring billows from each other's  
sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age  
Unknown to memory, was an earnest given  
By ready nature for a life of love,  
For endless constancy, and placid truth;  
But whatsoever of such rare treasure lay  
Reserved, had fate permitted, for support  
Of their maturer years, his present mind  
Was under fascination; — he beheld  
A vision, and adored the thing he saw.  
Arabian fiction never filled the world  
With half the wonders that were wrought  
for him.

Earth breathed in one great presence of the  
spring;

Life turned the meanest of her implements,  
Before his eyes, to price above all gold;

The house she dwelt in was a sainted  
shrine;

Her chamber-window did surpass in glory  
The portals of the dawn; all paradise

Could, by the simple opening of a door,  
Let itself in upon him:—pathways, walks,

Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit  
sank,

Surcharged, within him, overblest to move  
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world 51

To its dull round of ordinary cares;  
A man too happy for mortality!

So passed the time, till whether through  
effect

Of some unguarded moment that dissolved  
Virtuous restraint—ah, speak it, think it,  
not!

Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who  
saw

So many bars between his present state  
And the dear haven where he wished to be

In honourable wedlock with his Love, 60  
Was in his judgment tempted to decline

To perilous weakness, and entrust his cause  
To nature for a happy end of all;

Deem that by such fond hope the Youth  
was swayed,

And bear with their transgression, when I  
add

That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,  
Carried about her for a secret grief

The promise of a mother.

To conceal

The threatened shame, the parents of the  
Maid

Found means to hurry her away by night,  
And unforewarned, that in some distant

spot 71

She might remain shrouded in privacy,  
Until the babe was born. When morning

came

The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,  
And all uncertain whither he should turn,

Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but  
soon

Discovering traces of the fugitives,  
Their steps he followed to the Maid's re-  
treat.

Easily may the sequel be divined—  
Walks to and fro—watchings at every  
hour; 80

And the fair Captive, who, whene'er she  
may,

Is busy at her casement as the swallow  
Fluttering its pinions, almost within reach,

About the pendent nest, did thus espy  
Her Lover!—thence a stolen interview,

Accomplished under friendly shade of  
night.

I pass the raptures of the pair;—such  
theme

Is, by innumerable poets, touched  
In more delightful verse than skill of mine

Could fashion; chiefly by that darling bard  
Who told of Juliet and her Romeo, 91

And of the lark's note heard before its  
time,

And of the streaks that laced the severing  
clouds

In the unrelenting east.—Through all her  
courts

The vacant city slept; the busy winds,  
That keep no certain intervals of rest,

Moved not; meanwhile the galaxy dis-  
played

Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat  
Aloft;—momentous but uneasy bliss!

To their full hearts the universe seemed  
hung 100

On that brief meeting's slender filament!

They parted; and the generous Vaudra-  
cour

Reached speedily the native threshold, bent  
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)

A sacrifice of birthright to attain  
A final portion from his father's hand;

Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom then  
would flee

To some remote and solitary place,  
Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,

Where they may live, with no one to be-  
hold 110

Their happiness, or to disturb their love.  
But *now* of this no whisper; not the less,

If ever an obtrusive word were dropped  
Touching the matter of his passion, still,

In his stern father's hearing, Vaudracour  
Persisted openly that death alone

Should abrogate his human privilege  
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,

Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.

"You shall be baffled in your mad in-  
tent 120

If there be justice in the court of France,"  
Muttered the Father.—From these words  
the Youth

Conceived a terror; and, by night or day,  
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that full  
soon

Found dreadful provocation: for at night  
When to his chamber he retired, attempt  
Was made to seize him by three armed  
men,

Acting, in furtherance of the father's will,  
Under a private signet of the State.

One the rash Youth's ungovernable hand  
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave <sup>131</sup>  
A perilous wound — he shuddered to be-  
hold

The breathless corse; then peacefully re-  
signed

His person to the law, was lodged in prison,  
And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you observed a tuft of winged seed  
That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,  
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use  
Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,  
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to and  
fro <sup>140</sup>

Through the wide element? or have you  
marked

The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,  
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,  
Tortmented? by such aid you may con-  
ceive

The perturbation that ensued; — ah, no!  
Desperate the Maid — the Youth is stained  
with blood;

Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet!  
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured  
bough

Is Man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the  
Court, <sup>150</sup>

Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;  
But not without exaction of a pledge,  
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.

He flew to her from whom they would  
divide him —

He clove to her who could not give him  
peace —

Yea, his first word of greeting was, — "All  
right

Is gone from me; my lately-towering hopes,  
To the least fibre of their lowest root,  
Are withered; thou no longer canst be  
mine,

I thine — the conscience-stricken must not  
woo <sup>160</sup>

The unruffled Innocent, — I see thy face,  
Behold thee, and my misery is complete!"

"One, are we not?" exclaimed the  
Maiden — "One,  
For innocence and youth, for weal and  
woe?"

Then with the father's name she coupled  
words

Of vehement indignation; but the Youth  
Checked her with filial meekness; for no  
thought

Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense  
Of hasty anger rising in the eclipse  
Of true domestic loyalty, did e'er <sup>170</sup>  
Find place within his bosom. — Once again

The persevering wedge of tyranny  
Achieved their separation: and once more  
Were they united, — to be yet again

Disparted, pitiable lot! But here  
A portion of the tale may well be left  
In silence, though my memory could add  
Much how the Youth, in scanty space of  
time,

Was traversed from without; much, too,  
of thoughts

That occupied his days in solitude <sup>180</sup>  
Under privation and restraint; and what,  
Through dark and shapeless fear of things  
to come,

And what, through strong compunction for  
the past,

He suffered — breaking down in heart and  
mind!

Doomed to a third and last captivity,  
His freedom he recovered on the eve  
Of Julia's travail. When the babe was  
born,

Its presence tempted him to cherish schemes  
Of future happiness. "You shall return,  
Julia," said he, "and to your father's  
house <sup>190</sup>

Go with the child. — You have been  
wretched; yet

The silver shower, whose reckless burthen  
weighs

Too heavily upon the lily's head,  
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.

Malice, beholding you, will melt away.  
Go! — 't is a town where both of us were  
born;

None will reproach you, for our truth is  
known;

And if, amid those once-bright bowers, our  
fate

Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.

With ornaments — the prettiest, nature  
yields <sup>200</sup>

Or art can fashion, shall you deck our boy,  
And feed his countenance with your own  
sweet looks

Till no one can resist him. — Now, even  
now,

I see him sporting on the sunny lawn;  
My father from the window sees him too;  
Startled, as if some new-created thing  
Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods  
Bounded before him; — but the unweeeting  
Child

Shall by his beauty win his grandsire's  
heart

So that it shall be softened, and our loves  
End happily, as they began!"

These gleams  
Appeared but seldom; oftener was he seen  
Propping a pale and melancholy face  
Upon the Mother's bosom; resting thus  
His head upon one breast, while from the  
other

The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.  
— That pillow is no longer to be thine,  
Fond Youth! that mournful solace now  
must pass

Into the list of things that cannot be!  
Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears 230  
The sentence, by her mother's lip pro-  
nounced,

That dooms her to a convent. — Who shall  
tell,

Who dares report, the tidings to the lord  
Of her affections? so they blindly asked  
Who knew not to what quiet depths a weight  
Of agony had pressed the Sufferer down:  
The word, by others dreaded, he can bear  
Composed and silent, without visible sign  
Of even the least emotion. Noting this,  
When the impatient object of his love 230  
Upbraided him with slackness, he returned  
No answer, only took the Mother's hand  
And kissed it; seemingly devoid of pain,  
Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed,  
Was a dependant on the obdurate heart  
Of one who came to disunite their lives  
For ever — sad alternative! preferred,  
By the unbending Parents of the Maid,  
To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed.  
— So be it!

In the city he remained 240  
A season after Julia had withdrawn  
To those religious walls. He, too, de-  
parts —

Who with him? — even the senseless Lit-  
tle-one.

With that sole charge he passed the city-  
gates,

For the last time, attendant by the side  
Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan,  
In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,  
That rose a brief league distant from the  
town,

The dwellers in that house where he had  
lodged

Accompanied his steps, by anxious love 250  
Impelled; — they parted from him there,  
and stood

Watching below till he had disappeared  
On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely took,  
Throughout that journey, from the vehicle  
(Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!) that  
veiled

The tender infant: and, at every inn,  
And under every hospitable tree  
At which the bearers halted or reposed,  
Laid him with timid care upon his knees,  
And looked, as mothers ne'er were known  
to look, 260

Upon the nursing which his arms em-  
braced.

This was the manner in which Vaudra-  
cour

Departed with his infant; and thus reached  
His father's house, where to the innocent  
child

Admittance was denied. The young man  
spake

No word of indignation or reproof,  
But of his father begged, a last request,  
That a retreat might be assigned to him  
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,  
With such allowance as his wants required;  
For wishes he had none. To a lodge that  
stood 271

Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the  
age

Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew;  
And thither took with him his motherless  
Babe,

And one domestic for their common needs,  
An aged woman. It consoled him here  
To attend upon the orphan, and perform  
Obsequious service to the precious child,  
Which, after a short time, by some mis-  
take

Or indiscretion of the Father, died. — 280  
The Tale I follow to its last recess

Of suffering or of peace, I know not which:  
Theirs be the blame who caused the woe,  
not mine!

From this time forth he never shared a smile  
With mortal creature. An Inhabitant  
Of that same town, in which the pair had left  
So lively a remembrance of their griefs,  
By chance of business, coming within reach

Of his retirement, to the forest lodge  
Repaired, but only found the matron there,  
Who told him that his pains were thrown away,

For that her Master never uttered word  
To living thing — not even to her. — Behold!

While they were speaking, Vaudracour approached;

But, seeing some one near, as on the latch  
Of the garden-gate his hand was laid, he shrunk —

And, like a shadow, glided out of view.  
Shocked at his savage aspect, from the place

The visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth  
Cut off from all intelligence with man, <sup>300</sup>  
And shunning even the light of common day;

Nor could the voice of Freedom, which  
through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
Or personal memory of his own deep wrongs,

Rouse him: but in those solitary shades  
His days he wasted, an imbecile mind!

### THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT

BY MY SISTER

1805. 1815

Suggested to her while beside my sleeping children.

The days are cold, the nights are long,  
The north-wind sings a doleful song;  
Then hush again upon my breast;  
All merry things are now at rest,  
Save thee, my pretty Love!

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,  
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;  
There's nothing stirring in the house  
Save one wee, hungry, nibbling mouse,  
Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;  
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright  
On the window pane bedropped with rain:  
Then, little Darling! sleep again,  
And wake when it is day.

### THE WAGGONER

1805. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The characters and story from fact.

In Cairo's crowded streets  
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,  
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

THOMSON.

TO

CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I sent you, a few weeks ago, the tale of Peter Bell, you asked "why 'The Waggoner' was not added?" — To say the truth — from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended this little Piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken, "The Waggoner" was read to you in manuscript, and, as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope, that, since the localities on which the Poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being therefore in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you; in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your Writings, and of the high esteem with which

I am very truly yours,  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, May 20, 1815.

### CANTO FIRST

'Tis spent — this burning day of June!  
Soft darkness o'er its latest gleams is stealing;  
The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round,  
is wheeling, —  
That solitary bird  
Is all that can be heard  
In silence deeper far than that of deepest noon!  
Confiding Glow-worms, 't is a night  
Propitious to your earth-born light!



But, where the scattered stars are seen  
 In hazy straits the clouds between, 10  
 Each, in his station twinkling not,  
 Seems changed into a pallid spot.  
 The mountains against heaven's grave  
 weight  
 Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.  
 The air, as in a lion's den,  
 Is close and hot; — and now and then  
 Comes a tired and sultry breeze  
 With a haunting and a panting,  
 Like the stifling of disease;  
 But the dews allay the heat, 20  
 And the silence makes it sweet.  
 Hush, there is some one on the stir!  
 'T is Benjamin the Waggoner;  
 Who long hath trod this toilsome way,  
 Companion of the night and day.  
 That far-off tinkling's drowsy cheer,  
 Mixed with a faint yet grating sound  
 In a moment lost and found,  
 The Wain announces — by whose side  
 Along the banks of Rydal Mere 30  
 He paces on, a trusty Guide, —  
 Listen! you can scarcely hear!  
 Hither he his course is bending; —  
 Now he leaves the lower ground,  
 And up the craggy hill ascending  
 Many a stop and stay he makes,  
 Many a breathing-fit he takes; —  
 Steep the way and wearisome,  
 Yet all the while his whip is dumb!  
 The Horses have worked with right  
 good-will, 40  
 And so have gained the top of the hill;  
 He was patient, they were strong,  
 And now they smoothly glide along,  
 Recovering breath, and pleased to win  
 The praises of mild Benjamin.  
 Heaven shield him from mishap and snare!  
 But why so early with this prayer? —  
 Is it for threatenings in the sky?  
 Or for some other danger nigh?  
 No; none is near him yet, though he 50  
 Be one of much infirmity;  
 For at the bottom of the brow,  
 Where once the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Offered a greeting of good ale  
 To all who entered Grasmere Vale;  
 And called on him who must depart  
 To leave it with a jovial heart;  
 There, where the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Once hung, a Poet harbours now,  
 A simple water-drinking Bard; 60  
 Why need our Hero then (though frail

His best resolves) be on his guard?  
 He marches by, secure and bold;  
 Yet while he thinks on times of old,  
 It seems that all looks wondrous cold;  
 He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,  
 And, for the honest folk within,  
 It is a doubt by Benjamin  
 Whether they be alive or dead!  
 Here is no danger, — none at all! 70  
 Beyond his wish he walks secure;  
 But pass a mile — and then for trial, —  
 Then for the pride of self-denial;  
 If he resist that tempting door,  
 Which with such friendly voice will call;  
 If he resist those casement panes,  
 And that bright gleam which thence will  
 fall  
 Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,  
 Inviting him with cheerful lure:  
 For still, though all be dark elsewhere, 80  
 Some shining notice will be there,  
 Of open house and ready fare.  
 The place to Benjamin right well  
 Is known, and by as strong a spell  
 As used to be that sign of love  
 And hope — the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE;  
 He knows it to his cost, good Man!  
 Who does not know the famous SWAN?  
 Object uncouth! and yet our boast,  
 For it was painted by the Host; 90  
 His own conceit the figure planned,  
 'T was coloured all by his own hand;  
 And that frail Child of thirsty clay,  
 Of whom I sing this rustic lay,  
 Could tell with self-dissatisfaction  
 Quaint stories of the bird's attraction!  
 Well! that is past — and in despite  
 Of open door and shining light.  
 And now the conqueror essays  
 The long ascent of Dunmail-raise; 100  
 And with his team is gentle here  
 As when he clomb from Rydal Mere;  
 His whip they do not dread — his voice  
 They only hear it to rejoice.  
 To stand or go is at *their* pleasure;  
 Their efforts and their time they measure  
 By generous pride within the breast;  
 And, while they strain, and while they rest,  
 He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.  
 Now am I fairly safe to-night — 110  
 And with proud cause my heart is light:  
 I trespassed lately worse than ever —  
 But Heaven has blest a good endeavour;  
 And, to my soul's content, I find  
 The evil One is left behind.

Yes, let my master fume and fret,  
 Here am I — with my horses yet !  
 My jolly team, he finds that ye  
 Will work for nobody but me !  
 Full proof of this the Country gained; 120  
 It knows how ye were vexed and strained,  
 And forced unworthy stripes to bear,  
 When trusted to another's care.  
 Here was it — on this rugged slope,  
 Which now ye climb with heart and hope,  
 I saw you, between rage and fear,  
 Plunge, and fling back a spiteful ear,  
 And ever more and more confused,  
 As ye were more and more abused:  
 As chance would have it, passing by 130  
 I saw you in that jeopardy:  
 A word from me was like a charm;  
 Ye pulled together with one mind;  
 And your huge burthen, safe from harm,  
 Moved like a vessel in the wind !  
 — Yes, without me, up hills so high  
 'T is vain to strive for mastery.  
 Then grieve not, jolly team ! though tough  
 The road we travel, steep, and rough;  
 Though Rydal-heights and Dunmail-raise,  
 And all their fellow banks and braes, 141  
 Full often make you stretch and strain,  
 And halt for breath and halt again,  
 Yet to their sturdiness 't is owing  
 That side by side we still are going !  
 While Benjamin in earnest mood  
 His meditations thus pursued,  
 A storm, which had been smothered long,  
 Was growing inwardly more strong;  
 And, in its struggles to get free, 150  
 Was busily employed as he.  
 The thunder had begun to growl —  
 He heard not, too intent of soul;  
 The air was now without a breath —  
 He marked not that 't was still as death.  
 But soon large rain-drops on his head  
 Fell with the weight of drops of lead; —  
 He starts — and takes, at the admonition,  
 A sage survey of his condition.  
 The road is black before his eyes, 160  
 Glimmering faintly where it lies;  
 Black is the sky — and every hill,  
 Up to the sky, is blacker still —  
 Sky, hill, and dale, one dismal room,  
 Hung round and overhung with gloom;  
 Save that above a single height  
 Is to be seen a lurid light,  
 Above Helm-crag — a streak half dead,  
 A burning of portentous red;  
 And near that lurid light, full well 170

The ASTROLOGER, sage Sidrophel,  
 Where at his desk and book he sits,  
 Puzzling aloft his curious wits; •  
 He whose domain is held in common  
 With no one but the ANCIENT WOMAN,  
 Cowering beside her rifted cell,  
 As if intent on magic spell; —  
 Dread pair, that, spite of wind and weather,  
 Still sit upon Helm-crag together !

The ASTROLOGER was not unseen 180  
 By solitary Benjamin;  
 But total darkness came anon,  
 And he and everything was gone:  
 And suddenly a ruffling breeze,  
 (That would have rocked the sounding  
 trees

Had aught of sylvan growth been there)  
 Swept through the Hollow long and bare:  
 The rain rushed down — the road was bat-  
 tered,

As with the force of billows shattered;  
 The horses are dismayed, nor know 190  
 Whether they should stand or go;  
 And Benjamin is groping near them,  
 Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.  
 He is astounded, — wonder not, —  
 With such a charge in such a spot;  
 Astounded in the mountain gap  
 With thunder-peals, clap after clap,  
 Close-treading on the silent flashes —  
 And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes  
 Among the rocks; with weight of rain, 200  
 And sullen motions long and slow,  
 That to a dreary distance go —  
 Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,  
 A rending o'er his head begins the fray  
 again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do,  
 And oftentimes compelled to halt,  
 The horses cautiously pursue  
 Their way, without mishap or fault;  
 And now have reached that pile of stones,  
 Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones;  
 His who had once supreme command, 211  
 Last king of rocky Cumberland;  
 His bones, and those of all his Power  
 Slain here in a disastrous hour !

When, passing through this narrow strait,  
 Stony, and dark, and desolate,  
 Benjamin can faintly hear  
 A voice that comes from some one near,  
 A female voice: — "Whoe'er you be,  
 Stop," it exclaimed, "and pity me !" 220  
 And, less in pity than in wonder,  
 Amid the darkness and the thunder,

The Waggoner, with prompt command,  
Summons his horses to a stand.

While, with increasing agitation,  
The Woman urged her supplication,  
In rueful words, with sobs between —  
The voice of tears that fell unseen;  
There came a flash — a startling glare,  
And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare ! 230  
"T is not a time for nice suggestion,  
And Benjamin, without a question,  
Taking her for some way-worn rover,  
Said, "Mount, and get you under cover !"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse  
As a swollen brook with rugged course,  
Cried out, "Good brother, why so fast ?  
I've had a glimpse of you — *avast* !  
Or, since it suits you to be civil,  
Take her at once — for good and evil !" 240

"It is my Husband," softly said  
The Woman, as if half afraid:  
By this time she was snug within,  
Through help of honest Benjamin;  
She and her Babe, which to her breast  
With thankfulness the Mother pressed;  
And now the same strong voice more near  
Said cordially, "My Friend, what cheer ?  
Rough doings these ! as God's my judge  
The sky owes somebody a grudge ! 250  
We've had in half an hour or less  
A twelvemonth's terror and distress !"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man  
Would mount, too, quickly as he can:  
The Sailor — Sailor now no more,  
But such he had been heretofore —  
To courteous Benjamin replied,  
"Go you your way, and mind not me;  
For I must have, whate'er betide,  
My Ass and fifty things beside, — 260  
Go, and I'll follow speedily !"

The Waggon moves — and with its load  
Descends along the sloping road;  
And the rough Sailor instantly  
Turns to a little tent hard by:  
For when, at closing-in of day,  
The family had come that way,  
Green pasture and the soft warm air  
Tempted them to settle there. —  
Green is the grass for beast to graze, 270  
Around the stones of Dunmail-raise !

The Sailor gathers up his bed,  
Takes down the canvas overhead;  
And, after farewell to the place,  
A parting word — though not of grace,  
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,  
The way the Waggon went before.

## CANTO SECOND

If Wytheburn's modest House of prayer,  
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,  
Had, with its belfry's humble stock,  
A little pair that hang in air,  
Been mistress also of a clock,  
(And one, too, not in crazy plight)  
Twelve strokes that clock would have been  
telling

Under the brow of old Helvellyn —  
Its bead-roll of midnight,  
Then, when the Hero of my tale 10  
Was passing by, and, down the vale  
(The vale now silent, hushed I ween  
As if a storm had never been)  
Proceeding with a mind at ease;  
While the old Familiar of the seas,  
Intent to use his utmost haste,  
Gained ground upon the Waggon fast,  
And gives another lusty cheer;  
For spite of rumbling of the wheels,  
A welcome greeting he can hear; — 20  
It is a fiddle in its glee  
Dinning from the CHERRY TREE !

Thence the sound — the light is there —  
As Benjamin is now aware,  
Who, to his inward thoughts confined,  
Had almost reached the festive door,  
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,  
He hears a sound and sees a light,  
And in a moment calls to mind  
That 't is the village MERRY-NIGHT ! 30

Although before in no dejection,  
At this insidious recollection  
His heart with sudden joy is filled, —  
His ears are by the music thrilled,  
His eyes take pleasure in the road  
Glittering before him bright and broad;  
And Benjamin is wet and cold,  
And there are reasons manifold  
That make the good, tow'rds which he's  
yearning,

Look fairly like a lawful earning. 40  
Nor has thought time to come and go,  
To vibrate between yes and no;  
For, cries the Sailor, "Glorious chance  
That blew us hither ! — let him dance,  
Who can or will ! — my honest soul,  
Our treat shall be a friendly bowl !"  
He draws him to the door — "Come in,  
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin !  
And Benjamin — ah, woe is me !  
Gave the word — the horses heard 50  
And halted, though reluctantly.

"Blithe souls and lightsome hearts have  
we,

Feasting at the CHERRY TREE!"

This was the outside proclamation,

This was the inside salutation;

What bustling — jostling — high and low!

A universal overflow!

What tankards foaming from the tap!

What store of cakes in every lap!

What thumping — stumping — overhead!

The thunder had not been more busy: 61

With such a stir you would have said,

This little place may well be dizzy!

'Tis who can dance with greatest vigour —

'Tis what can be most prompt and eager;

As if it heard the fiddle's call,

The pewter clatters on the wall;

The very bacon shows its feeling,

Swinging from the smoky ceiling!

A steaming bowl, a blazing fire, 70

What greater good can heart desire?

'T were worth a wise man's while to try

The utmost anger of the sky:

To seek for thoughts of a gloomy cast,

If such the bright amends at last.

Now should you say I judge amiss,

The CHERRY TREE shows proof of this;

For soon of all the happy there,

Our Travellers are the happiest pair;

All care with Benjamin is gone — 80

A Caesar past the Rubicon!

He thinks not of his long, long strife; —

The Sailor, Man by nature gay,

Hath no resolves to throw away;

And he hath now forgot his Wife,

Hath quite forgotten her — or may be

Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,

Within that warm and peaceful berth,

Under cover,

Terror over, 90

Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.

With bowl that sped from hand to hand,

The gladdest of the gladsome band,

Amid their own delight and fun,

They hear — when every dance is done,

When every whirling bout is o'er —

The fiddle's *squeak* — that call to bliss,

Ever followed by a kiss;

They envy not the happy lot,

But enjoy their own the more! 100

While thus our jocund Travellers fare,

Up springs the Sailor from his chair —

Limps (for I might have told before

That he was lame) across the floor —

Is gone — returns — and with a prize;

With what? — a Ship of lusty size;

A gallant stately Man-of-war,

Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.

Surprise to all, but most surprise

To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes, 110

Not knowing that he had befriended

A Man so gloriously attended!

"This," cries the Sailor, "a Third-rate  
is —

Stand back, and you shall see her gratis!

This was the Flag-ship at the Nile,

The Vanguard — you may smirk and smile,

But, pretty Maid, if you look near,

You'll find you've much in little here!

A nobler ship did never swim,

And you shall see her in full trim: 120

I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,

Set every inch of sail upon her."

So said, so done; and masts, sails, yards,

He names them all; and interlards

His speech with uncouth terms of art,

Accomplished in the showman's part;

And then, as from a sudden check,

Cries out — "'T is there, the quarter-deck

On which brave Admiral Nelson stood —

A sight that would have roused your blood!

One eye he had, which, bright as ten, 131

Burned like a fire among his men;

Let this be land, and that be sea,

Here lay the French — and *thus* came we!"

Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,

The dancers all were gathered round,

And, such the stillness of the house,

You might have heard a nibbling mouse;

While, borrowing helps where'er he may,

The Sailor through the story runs 140

Of ships to ships and guns to guns;

And does his utmost to display

The dismal conflict, and the might

And terror of that marvellous night!

"A bowl, a bowl of double measure,"

Cries Benjamin, "a draught of length,

To Nelson, England's pride and treasure

Her bulwark and her tower of strength!"

When Benjamin had seized the bowl,

The mastiff, from beneath the waggon, 150

Where he lay, watchful as a dragon,

Rattled his chain; — 't was all in vain,

For Benjamin, triumphant soul!

He heard the monitory growl;

Heard — and in opposition quaffed

A deep, determined, desperate draught!

Nor did the battered Tar forget,

Or flinch from what he deemed his debt:

Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,

Back to her place the ship he led;  
 Wheeled her back in full apparel;  
 And so, flag flying at mast head,  
 Re-yoked her to the Ass: — anon,  
 Cries Benjamin, "We must be gone."  
 Thus, after two hours' hearty stay,  
 Again behold them on their way!

## CANTO THIRD

RIGHT gladly had the horses stirred,  
 When they the wished-for greeting heard,  
 The whip's loud notice from the door,  
 That they were free to move once more.  
 You think, those doings must have bred  
 In them disheartening doubts and dread;  
 No, not a horse of all the eight,  
 Although it be a moonless night,  
 Fears either for himself or freight;  
 For this they know (and let it hide,  
 In part, the offences of their guide)  
 That Benjamin, with clouded brains,  
 Is worth the best with all their pains;  
 And, if they had a prayer to make,  
 The prayer would be that they may take  
 With him whatever comes in course,  
 The better fortune or the worse;  
 That no one else may have business near  
 them,

And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.

So, forth in dauntless mood they fare,  
 And with them goes the guardian pair.

Now, heroes, for the true commotion,  
 The triumph of your late devotion  
 Can aught on earth impede delight,  
 Still mounting to a higher height;  
 And higher still — a greedy flight!  
 Can any low-born care pursue her?  
 Can any mortal clog come to her?  
 No notion have they — not a thought,  
 That is from joyless regions brought!  
 And, while they coast the silent lake,  
 Their inspiration I partake;  
 Share their empyreal spirits — yea,  
 With their enraptured vision, see —  
 O fancy — what a jubilee!  
 What shifting pictures — clad in gleams  
 Of colour bright as feverish dreams!  
 Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,  
 Involved and restless all — a scene  
 Pregnant with mutual exaltation,  
 Rich change, and multiplied creation!  
 This sight to me the Muse imparts; —  
 And then, what kindness in their hearts!  
 What tears of rapture, what vow-making,

160  
 Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking!  
 What solemn, vacant, interlacing,  
 As if they'd fall asleep embracing!  
 Then, in the turbulence of glee,  
 And in the excess of amity,  
 Says Benjamin, "That Ass of thine,  
 He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine:  
 If he were tethered to the waggon,  
 He'd drag as well what he is dragging,  
 And we, as brother should with brother,  
 Might trudge it alongside each other!"

Forthwith, obedient to command,  
 The horses made a quiet stand;  
 And to the waggon's skirts was tied  
 The Creature, by the Mastiff's side,  
 The Mastiff wondering, and perplex  
 With dread of what will happen next;  
 And thinking it but sorry cheer,  
 To have such company so near!

This new arrangement made, the Wain  
 Through the still night proceeds again;  
 No Moon hath risen her light to lend;  
 But indistinctly may be kenned  
 The VANGUARD, following close behind,  
 Sails spread, as if to catch the wind!

"Thy wife and child are snug and warm,  
 Thy ship will travel without harm;  
 I like," said Benjamin, "her shape and  
 stature;

And this of mine — this bulky creature  
 Of which I have the steering — this,  
 Seen fairly, is not much amiss!  
 We want your streamers, friend, you know;  
 But, altogether as we go,  
 We make a kind of handsome show!  
 Among these hills, from first to last,  
 We've weathered many a furious blast;  
 Hard passage forcing on, with head  
 Against the storm, and canvas spread.  
 I hate a boaster; but to thee  
 Will say't, who know'st both land and  
 sea,

The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine  
 Is hardly worse beset than mine,  
 When cross-winds on her quarter beat;  
 And, fairly lifted from my feet,  
 I stagger onward — heaven knows how;  
 But not so pleasantly as now:  
 Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,  
 And many a foundrous pit surrounded!  
 Yet here we are, by night and day  
 Grinding through rough and smooth our  
 way;

Through foul and fair our task fulfilling;  
 And long shall be so yet — God willing!"

"Ay," said the Tar, "through fair and  
foul —  
But save us from yon screeching owl ! "  
That instant was begun a fray  
Which called their thoughts another way :  
The mastiff, ill-conditioned carl ! 101  
What must he do but growl and snarl,  
Still more and more dissatisfied  
With the meek comrade at his side !  
Till, not incensed though put to proof,  
The Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,  
Salutes the Mastiff on the head ;  
And so were better manners bred,  
And all was calmed and quieted.  
"Yon screech-owl," says the Sailor,  
turning 110

Back to his former cause of mourning,  
"Yon owl ! — pray God that all be well !  
"T is worse than any funeral bell ;  
As sure as I 've the gift of sight,  
We shall be meeting ghosts to-night ! "  
— Said Benjamin, " This whip shall lay  
A thousand, if they cross our way.  
I know that Wanton's noisy station,  
I know him and his occupation ;  
The jolly bird hath learned his cheer 120  
Upon the banks of Windermere ;  
Where a tribe of them make merry,  
Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry ;  
Hallooing from an open throat,  
Like travellers shouting for a boat.  
— The tricks he learned at Windermere  
This vagrant owl is playing here —  
That is the worst of his employment :  
He 's at the top of his enjoyment ! "

This explanation stilled the alarm, 130  
Cured the foreboder like a charm,  
This, and the manner, and the voice,  
Summoned the Sailor to rejoice ;  
His heart is up — he fears no evil  
From life or death, from man or devil ;  
He wheels — and, making many stops,  
Brandished his crutch against the mountain  
tops ;

And, while he talked of blows and scars,  
Benjamin, among the stars,  
Beheld a dancing — and a glancing ; 140  
Such retreating and advancing  
As, I ween, was never seen  
In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars !

## CANTO FOURTH

Thus they, with freaks of proud delight,  
Beguile the remnant of the night ;

And many a snatch of jovial song  
Regales them as they wind along ;  
While to the music, from on high,  
The echoes make a glad reply. —  
But the sage Muse the revel needs  
No farther than her story needs ;  
Nor will she servilely attend  
The loitering journey to its end. 10  
— Blithe spirits of her own impel  
The Muse, who scents the morning air,  
To take of this transported pair  
A brief and unreprieved farewell ;  
To quit the slow-paced waggon's side,  
And wander down yon hawthorn dell,  
With murmuring Greta for her guide.  
— There doth she ken the awful form  
Of Raven-crag — black as a storm —  
Glimmering through the twilight pale ; 20  
And Glimmer-crag, his tall twin brother,  
Each peering forth to meet the other : —  
And, while she roves through St. John's  
Vale,

Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,  
By sheep-track or through cottage lane,  
Where no disturbance comes to intrude  
Upon the pensive solitude.  
Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,  
With the rude shepherd's favoured glance,  
Beholds the faeries in array, 30  
Whose party-coloured garments gay  
The silent company betray :  
Red, green, and blue ; a moment's sight !  
For Skiddaw-top with rosy light  
Is touched — and all the band take flight.  
— Fly also, Muse ! and from the dell  
Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell ;  
Thence, look thou forth o'er wood and lawn  
Hear with the frost-like dews of dawn ;  
Across yon meadowy bottom look, 40  
Where close fogs hide their parent brook ;  
And see, beyond that hamlet small,  
The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,  
Lurking in a double shade,  
By trees and lingering twilight made !  
There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,  
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat  
To noble Clifford ; from annoy  
Concealed the persecuted boy,  
Well pleased in rustic garb to feed 50  
His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed  
Among this multitude of hills,  
Crag, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills ;  
Which soon the morning shall unfold,  
From east to west, in ample vest  
Of massy gloom and radiance bold.

The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed  
Hung low, begin to rise and spread;  
Even while I speak, their skirts of grey  
Are smitten by a silver ray; 60  
And lo ! — up Castrigg's naked steep  
(Where, smoothly urged, the vapours sweep  
Along — and scatter and divide,  
Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)  
The stately waggon is ascending,  
With faithful Benjamin attending,  
Apparent now beside his team —  
Now lost amid a glittering steam :  
And with him goes his Sailor-friend,  
By this time near their journey's end; 70  
And, after their high-minded riot,  
Sickenings into thoughtful quiet;  
As if the morning's pleasant hour  
Had for their joys a killing power.  
And, sooth, for Benjamin a vein  
Is opened of still deeper pain  
As if his heart by notes were stung  
From out the lowly hedge-rows flung;  
As if the Warbler lost in light  
Reproved his soarings of the night, 80  
In strains of rapture pure and holy  
Upbraided his distempered folly.  
Drooping is he, his step is dull;  
But the horses stretch and pull;  
With increasing vigour climb,  
Eager to repair lost time;  
Whether, by their own desert,  
Knowing what cause there is for shame,  
They are labouring to avert  
As much as may be of the blame, 90  
Which, they foresee, must soon alight  
Upon his head, whom, in despite  
Of all his failings, they love best;  
Whether for him they are distrest,  
Or, by length of fasting roused,  
Are impatient to be housed:  
Up against the hill they strain  
Tugging at the iron chain,  
Tugging all with might and main,  
Last and foremost, every horse 100  
To the utmost of his force !  
And the smoke and respiration,  
Rising like an exhalation,  
Blend with the mist — a moving shroud —  
To form an undissolving cloud;  
Which, with slant ray, the merry sun  
Takes delight to play upon.  
Never golden-haired Apollo,  
Pleased some favoured chief to follow  
Through accidents of peace or war, 110  
In a perilous moment threw

Around the object of his care  
Veil of such celestial hue;  
Interposed so bright a screen —  
Him and his enemies between !  
Alas ! what boots it ? — who can hide,  
When the malicious Fates are bent  
On working out an ill intent ?  
Can destiny be turned aside ?  
No — sad progress of my story ! 120  
Benjamin, this outward glory  
Cannot shield thee from thy Master,  
Who from Keswick has pricked forth,  
Sour and surly as the north;  
And, in fear of some disaster,  
Comes to give what help he may,  
And to hear what thou canst say;  
If, as needs he must forebode,  
Thou hast been loitering on the road !  
His fears, his doubts, may now take  
flight — 130  
The wished-for object is in sight;  
Yet, trust the Muse, it rather hath  
Stirred him up to livelier wrath;  
Which he stifles, moody man !  
With all the patience that he can;  
To the end that, at your meeting,  
He may give thee decent greeting.  
There he is — resolved to stop,  
Till the waggon gains the top;  
But stop he cannot — must advance: 140  
Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,  
Espies — and instantly is ready,  
Self-collected, poised, and steady:  
And, to be the better seen,  
Issues from his radiant shroud,  
From his close-attending cloud,  
With careless air and open mien.  
Erect his port, and firm his going;  
So struts yon cock that now is crowing;  
And the morning light in grace 150  
Strikes upon his lifted face,  
Hurrying the pallid hue away  
That might his trespasses betray.  
But what can all avail to clear him,  
Or what need of explanation,  
Parley or interrogation ?  
For the Master sees, alas !  
That unhappy Figure near him,  
Limping o'er the dewy grass,  
Where the road it fringes, sweet, 160  
Soft and cool to way-worn feet;  
And, O indignity ! an Ass,  
By his noble Mastiff's side,  
Tethered to the waggon's tail:  
And the ship, in all her pride,

Following after in full sail !  
 Not to speak of babe and mother;  
 Who, contented with each other,  
 And snug as birds in leafy harbour,  
 Find, within, a blessed harbour ! 170

With eager eyes the Master pries;  
 Looks in and out, and through and through;  
 Says nothing — till at last he spies  
 A wound upon the Mastiff's head,  
 A wound, where plainly might be read  
 What feats an Ass's hoof can do !  
 But drop the rest: — this aggravation,  
 This complicated provocation,  
 A hoard of grievances unsealed;  
 All past forgiveness it repealed; 180  
 And thus, and through distempered blood  
 On both sides, Benjamin the good,  
 The patient, and the tender-hearted,  
 Was from his team and waggon parted;  
 When duty of that day was o'er,  
 Laid down his whip — and served no more. —  
 Nor could the waggon long survive,  
 Which Benjamin had ceased to drive:  
 It lingered on; — guide after guide  
 Ambitiously the office tried; 190  
 But each unmanageable hill  
 Called for *his* patience and *his* skill; —  
 And sure it is, that through this night,  
 And what the morning brought to light,  
 Two losses had we to sustain,  
 We lost both WAGGONER and WAIN !

Accept, O Friend, for praise or blame,  
 The gift of this adventurous song;  
 A record which I dared to frame,  
 Though timid scruples checked me long;  
 They checked me — and I left the theme  
 Untouched — in spite of many a gleam  
 Of fancy which thereon was shed,  
 Like pleasant sunbeams shifting still  
 Upon the side of a distant hill:  
 But Nature might not be gainsaid; 10  
 For what I have and what I miss  
 I sing of these; — it makes my bliss !  
 Nor is it I who play the part,  
 But a shy spirit in my heart,  
 That comes and goes — will sometimes  
 leap  
 From hiding-places ten years deep;  
 Or haunts me with familiar face,  
 Returning, like a ghost unaid,  
 Until the debt I owe be paid.  
 Forgive me, then; for I had been 20

On friendly terms with this Machine:  
 In him, while he was wont to trace  
 Our roads, through many a long year's  
 space,

A living almanack had we;  
 We had a speaking diary,  
 That in this uneventful place  
 Gave to the days a mark and name  
 By which we knew them when they came.  
 — Yes, I, and all about me here,  
 Through all the changes of the year, 30  
 Had seen him through the mountains go,  
 In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,  
 Majestically huge and slow:  
 Or, with a milder grace adorning  
 The landscape of a summer's morning;  
 While Grasmere smoothed her liquid plain  
 The moving image to detain;  
 And mighty Fairfield, with a chime  
 Of echoes, to his march kept time;  
 When little other business stirred, 40  
 And little other sound was heard;  
 In that delicious hour of balm,  
 Stillness, solitude, and calm,  
 While yet the valley is arrayed,  
 On this side with a sober shade;  
 On that is prodigally bright —  
 Crag, lawn, and wood — with rosy light.  
 — But most of all, thou Lordly Wain !  
 I wish to have thee here again,  
 When windows flap and chimney roars, 50  
 And all is dismal out of doors;  
 And, sitting by my fire, I see  
 Eight sorry carts, no less a train;  
 Unworthy successors of thee,  
 Come straggling through the wind and  
 rain !

And oft, as they pass slowly on,  
 Beneath my windows, one by one,  
 See, perched upon the naked height  
 The summit of a cumbrous freight,  
 A single traveller — and there 60  
 Another; then perhaps a pair —  
 The lame, the sickly, and the old;  
 Men, women, heartless with the cold;  
 And babes in wet and starveling plight;  
 Which once, be weather as it might,  
 Had still a nest within a nest,  
 Thy shelter — and their mother's breast!  
 Then most of all, then far the most,  
 Do I regret what we have lost;  
 Am grieved for that unhappy sin 70  
 Which robbed us of good Benjamin;  
 And of his stately Charge, which none  
 Could keep alive when He was gone !



## FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT  
ITS COMMENCEMENT. REPRINTED FROM  
THE FRIEND

1805. 1810

An extract from the long poem on my own poetical education. It was first published by Coleridge in his *Friend*, which is the reason of its having had a place in every edition of my poems since.

Oh ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood

Upon our side, we who were strong in love !  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven !— Oh ! times,

In which the meagre, stalc, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance !  
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime Enchantress -- to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her name !

Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,

The beauty wore of promise, that which sets

(As at some moment might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of paradise itself)  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.  
What temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of ? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away !

They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,

The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength

Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
As if they had within some lurking right  
To wield it ;— they, too, who, of gentle mood,

Had watched all gentle motions, and to these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves ;—  
Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty

Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,

And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish ;

Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where !

But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us,—the place where in the end

We find our happiness, or not at all ! 40

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY  
WARRIOR

1806. 1807

The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here pourtrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland ; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be?  
— It is the generous Spirit, who, when  
brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish  
thought:

Whose high endeavours are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always  
bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent  
to learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not  
there,

But makes his moral being his prime care;  
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,  
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!  
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
In face of these doth exercise a power  
Which is our human nature's highest dower;  
Controls them and subdues, transmutes,  
bereaves

Of their bad influence, and their good re-  
ceives:

By objects, which might force the soul to  
abate

Her feeling, rendered more compassion-  
ate;

Is placable — because occasions rise  
So often that demand such sacrifice;  
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more  
pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,  
As more exposed to suffering and distress;  
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

— 'T is he whose law is reason; who de-  
pends

Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
Whence, in a state where men are tempted  
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30  
And what in quality or act is best  
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
He labours good on good to fix, and owes  
To virtue every triumph that he knows:  
— Who, if he rise to station of command,  
Rises by open means; and there will stand  
On honourable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire;  
Who comprehends his trust, and to the  
same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim; 40  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait  
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;

Whom they must follow; on whose head  
must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:  
Whose powers shed round him in the com-  
mon strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;  
But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has  
joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a Lover; and attired 51  
With sudden brightness, like a Man in-  
spired;

And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the  
law

In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;  
Or if an unexpected call succeed,  
Come when it will, is equal to the need:  
— He who, though thus endued as with a  
sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;  
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be, 61  
Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve;  
More brave for this, that he hath much to  
love: —

'T is, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity, —  
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not —  
Plays, in the many games of life, that one  
Where what he most doth value must be  
won: 71

Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,  
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
Who, not content that former worth stand  
fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self-surpass:  
Who, whether praise of him must walk the  
earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,  
And leave a dead unprofitable name — 80  
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;  
And, while the mortal mist is gathering,  
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's  
applause:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He  
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

THE HORN OF EGREMONT  
CASTLE

1806. 1807

A tradition transferred from the ancient mansion of Hutton John, the seat of the Hudlestons, to Egremont Castle.

ERE the Brothers through the gateway  
Issued forth with old and young,  
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed  
Which for ages there had hung.  
Horn it was which none could sound,  
No one upon living ground,  
Save He who came as rightful Heir  
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record  
Had the House of Lucie born, 10  
Who of right had held the Lordship  
Claimed by proof upon the Horn:  
Each at the appointed hour  
Tried the Horn, — it owned his power;  
He was acknowledged: and the blast,  
Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the  
last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
And to Hubert thus said he,  
"What I speak this Horn shall witness  
For thy better memory. 20  
Hear, then, and neglect me not!  
At this time, and on this spot,  
The words are uttered from my heart,  
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going  
Life to risk by sea and land,  
In which course if Christ our Saviour  
Do my sinful soul demand,  
Hither come thou back straightway,  
Hubert, if alive that day; 30  
Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
May have a living House still left in thee!"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert;  
"As I am thy Father's son,  
What thou askest, noble Brother,  
With God's favour shall be done."  
So were both right well content:  
Forth they from the Castle went,  
And at the head of their Array  
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies 41  
Were a line for valour famed),

And where'er their strokes alighted,  
There the Saracens were tamed.  
Whence, then, could it come — the  
thought —

By what evil spirit brought?  
Oh! can a brave Man wish to take  
His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's  
sake?

"Sir!" the Ruffians said to Hubert,  
"Deep he lies in Jordan flood." 50  
Stricken by this ill assurance,  
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.  
"Take your earnings." — Oh! that I  
Could have seen my Brother die!  
It was a pang that vexed him then;  
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace!  
Nor of him were tidings heard;  
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
Back again to England steered. 60  
To his Castle Hubert sped;  
Nothing has he now to dread.  
But silent and by stealth he came,  
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,  
Night or day, at even or morn;  
No one's eye had seen him enter,  
No one's ear had heard the Horn.  
But bold Hubert lives in glee:  
Months and years went smilingly; 70  
With plenty was his table spread;  
And bright the Lady is who shares his  
bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters;  
And, as good men do, he sate  
At his board by these surrounded,  
Flourishing in fair estate.  
And while thus in open day  
Once he sate, as old books say,  
A blast was uttered from the Horn,  
Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace! 81  
He is come to claim his right:  
Ancient castle, woods, and mountains  
Hear the challenge with delight.  
Hubert! though the blast be blown  
He is helpless and alone:  
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word!  
And there he may be lodged, and thou be  
Lord.

Speak! — astounded Hubert cannot;  
 And, if power to speak he had,  
 All are daunted, all the household  
 Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
 'Tis Sir Eustace; if it be  
 Living man, it must be he!  
 Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,  
 And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of:  
 To his Brother then he came,  
 Made confession, asked forgiveness,  
 Asked it by a brother's name,  
 And by all the saints in heaven;  
 And of Eustace was forgiven:  
 Then in a convent went to hide  
 His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels  
 Had preserved from murderers' hands,  
 And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
 Lived with honour on his lands.  
 Sons he had, saw sons of theirs:  
 And through ages, heirs of heirs,  
 A long posterity renowned,  
 Sounded the Horn which they alone could  
 sound.

## A COMPLAINT

1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested  
 by a change in the manner of a friend.

THERE is a change -- and I am poor;  
 Your love hath been, not long ago,  
 A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
 Whose only business was to flow;  
 And flow it did: not taking heed  
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!  
 Blest was I then all bliss above!  
 Now, for that consecrated fount  
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,  
 What have I? shall I dare to tell?  
 A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love — it may be deep —  
 I trust it is, — and never dry:  
 What matter? if the waters sleep  
 In silence and obscurity.  
 — Such change, and at the very door  
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

## STRAY PLEASURES

1806. 1807

“ — *Pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gyts to be claimed by whoever shall find.* ”

Suggested on the Thames by the sight of  
 one of those floating mills that used to be seen  
 there. This I noticed on the Surrey side be-  
 tween Somerset House and Blackfriars Bridge.  
 Charles Lamb was with me at the time; and I  
 thought it remarkable that I should have to  
 point out to *him*, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight  
 so interesting as the happy group dancing on  
 the platform. Mills of this kind used to be,  
 and perhaps still are, not uncommon on the  
 Continent. I noticed several upon the river  
 Saone in the year 1799, particularly near the  
 town of Chalons, where my friend Jones and I  
 halted a day when we crossed France; so far  
 on foot: there we embarked, and floated down  
 to Lyons.

By their floating mill,  
 That lies dead and still,  
 Behold yon Prisoners three,  
 The Miller with two Dames, on the breast  
 of the Thames!  
 The platform is small, but gives room for  
 them all;  
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
 To their mill where it floats,  
 To their house and their mill tethered fast:  
 To the small wooden isle where, their work  
 to beguile,  
 They from morning to even take whatever  
 is given; —  
 And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,  
 All alive with the fires  
 Of the sun going down to his rest,  
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
 They dance, — there are three, as jocund as  
 free,  
 While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
 They themselves make the reel,  
 And their music's a prey which they seize;  
 It plays not for them, — what matter? 't is  
 theirs;  
 And if they had care, it has scattered their  
 cares,  
 While they dance, crying, “Long as ye  
 please!”

They dance not for me,  
 Yet mine is their glee !  
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever  
     shall find;  
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly  
     kind,  
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth. 30

The showers of the spring  
 Rouse the birds, and they sing;  
 If the wind do but stir for his proper de-  
     light,  
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will  
     kiss;  
 Each wave, one and t' other, speeds after  
     his brother:  
 They are happy, for that is their right !

## POWER OF MUSIC

1806. 1807

Taken from life.

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith may  
     grow bold,  
 And take to herself all the wonders of  
     old ; —  
 Near the stately Pantheon you 'll meet with  
     the same  
 In the street that from Oxford hath bor-  
     rowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on the  
     crowd,  
 He sways them with harmony merry and  
     loud;  
 He fills with his power all their hearts to  
     the brim —  
 Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and  
     him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire  
     is this !  
 The weary have life, and the hungry have  
     bliss; 10  
 The mourner is cheered, and the anxious  
     have rest;  
 And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer  
     oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds  
     of the night,  
 So He, where he stands, is a centre of  
     light;

It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-  
     browed Jack,  
 And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket  
     on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in  
     haste —  
 What matter ! he 's caught — and his time  
     runs to waste;  
 The Newsmen is stopped, though he stops  
     on the fret;  
 And the half-breathless Lamplighter —  
     he 's in the net ! 20

The Porter sits down on the weight which  
     he bore;  
 The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her  
     store ; —  
 If a thief could be here he might pilfer at  
     ease;  
 She sees the Musician, 't is all that she sees !

He stands, backed by the wall ; — he abates  
     not his din;  
 His hat gives him vigour, with boons drop-  
     ping in,  
 From the old and the young, from the  
     poorest ; and there !  
 The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the  
     band  
 Of the pleasure it spreads through so thank-  
     ful a band; 30  
 I am glad for him, blind as he is ! — all the  
     while  
 If they speak 't is to praise, and they praise  
     with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in  
     height,  
 Not an inch of his body is free from delight;  
 Can he keep himself still, if he would ? oh,  
     not he !  
 The music stirs in him like wind through a  
     tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch;  
     like a tower  
 That long has leaned forward, leans hour  
     after hour ! —  
 That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is  
     bound,  
 While she dandles the Babe in her arms to  
     the sound. 40

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a  
stream;  
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a  
dream:  
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care  
not for you,  
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue!

STAR-GAZERS

1806. 1807

Observed by me in Leicester-square, as here  
described.

WHAT crowd is this ? what have we here !  
we must not pass it by;  
A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to  
the sky :  
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of  
little boat,  
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on  
Thames's water float.

The Showman chooses well his place, 't is  
Leicester's busy Square;  
And is as happy in his night, for the  
heavens are blue and fair;  
Calm, though impatient, is the crowd; each  
stands ready with the fee,  
And envies him that 's looking; — what an  
insight must it be !

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause ?  
Shall thy Implement have blame,  
A boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and  
is put to shame ?<sup>10</sup>  
Or is it good as others are, and be their  
eyes in fault ?  
Their eyes, or minds ? or, finally, is yon  
resplendent vault ?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as  
we have here ?  
Or gives a thing but small delight that  
never can be dear ?  
The silver moon with all her vales, and  
hills of mightiest fame,  
Doth she betray us when they 're seen ? or  
are they but a name ?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and  
strong,  
And bounty never yields so much but it  
seems to do her wrong ?

Or is it, that when human Souls a journey  
long have had  
And are returned into themselves, they  
cannot but be sad ?<sup>20</sup>

Or must we be constrained to think that  
these Spectators rude,  
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the  
multitude,  
Have souls which never yet have risen, and  
therefore prostrate lie ?  
No, no, this cannot be; — men thirst for  
power and majesty !

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the  
blissful mind employ  
Of him who gazes, or has gazed ? a grave  
and steady joy,  
That doth reject all show of pride, admits  
no outward sign,  
Because not of this noisy world, but silent  
and divine !

Whatever be the cause, 't is sure that they  
who pry and pore  
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less  
happy than before:<sup>30</sup>  
One after One they take their turn, nor  
have I one espied  
That doth not slackly go away, as if dis-  
satisfied.

"YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN  
ECHO"

1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The echo  
came from Nab-scar, when I was walking on  
the opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here  
mention, for my dear Sister's sake, that, while  
she was sitting alone one day high up on this  
part of Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by  
the voice of the Cuckoo heard from the crags  
at some distance that she could not suppress a  
wish to have a stone inscribed with her name  
among the rocks from which the sound pro-  
ceeded. On my return from my walk I recited  
these verses to Mrs. Wordsworth.

YES, it was the mountain Echo,  
Solitary, clear, profound,  
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
Giving to her sound for sound !

Unsolicited reply  
To a babbling wanderer sent;

Like her ordinary cry,  
Like — but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal Life ?  
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures !  
Slaves of folly, love, or strife —  
Voices of two different natures ?

Have not *we* too ? — yes, we have  
Answers, and we know not whence;  
Echoes from beyond the grave,  
Recognised intelligence !

Such rebounds our inward ear  
Catches sometimes from afar —  
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
For of God, — of God they are.

### "NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM"

1806. 1807

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them, — in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakspeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember is — "I grieved for Buonaparté." One was never written down: the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot particularise.

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room;

And hermits are contented with their cells;  
And students with their pensive citadels;  
Maid at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,  
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,

High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:  
In truth the prison, into which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,  
In sundry moods, 't was pastime to be bound  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;  
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs  
must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

### PERSONAL TALK

1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The last line but two stood, at first, better and more characteristically, thus :

"By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire."

My Sister and I were in the habit of having the tea-kettle in our little sitting-room; and we toasted the bread ourselves, which reminds me of a little circumstance not unworthy of being set down among these minutiae. Happening both of us to be engaged a few minutes one morning when we had a young prig of a Scotch lawyer to breakfast with us, my dear Sister, with her usual simplicity, put the toasting-fork with a slice of bread into the hands of this Edinburgh genius. Our little book-case stood on one side of the fire. To prevent loss of time, he took down a book, and fell to reading, to the neglect of the toast, which was burnt to a cinder. Many a time have we laughed at this circumstance, and other cottage simplicities of that day. By the bye, I have a spite at one of this series of Sonnets (I will leave the reader to discover which) as having been the means of nearly putting off for ever our acquaintance with dear Miss Fenwick, who has always stigmatised one line of it as vulgar, and worthy only of having been composed by a country squire.

I

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal talk. —  
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight:  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
bright,  
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
stalk,  
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with  
chalk  
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-  
night.  
Better than such discourse doth silence  
long,  
Long, barren silence, square with my de-  
sire;  
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,

And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen  
and see,  
And with a living pleasure we describe;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and  
glee

Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."  
Even be it so; yet still among your tribe, 21  
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not  
me!

Children are blest, and powerful; their  
world lies

More justly balanced; partly at their feet,  
And part far from them: sweetest melodies  
Are those that are by distance made more  
sweet;

Whose mind is but the mind of his own  
eyes,  
He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

III

Wings have we, — and as far as we can go,  
We may find pleasure: wilderness and  
wood,

Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood 30

Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books, are each a world; and  
books, we know,

Are a substantial world, both pure and  
good:

Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous  
store,

Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear, —  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor; 41  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.

IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote  
From evil-speaking; rancour, never sought,  
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.  
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I

Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joy-  
ous thought:

And thus from day to day my little boat  
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably. 50  
Blessings be with them — and eternal  
praise,

Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler  
cares —

The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!  
Oh! might my name be numbered among  
theirs,

Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

ADMONITION

1806. 1807

Intended more particularly for the perusal  
of those who may have happened to be enamoured  
of some beautiful Place of Retreat, in the  
Country of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt — and gaze with  
brightening eye!

The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook  
Hath stirred thee deeply; with its own dear  
brook,

Its own small pasture, almost its own sky!  
But covet not the Abode; — forbear to sigh,  
As many do, repining while they look;  
Intruders — who would tear from Nature's  
book

This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.  
Think what the home must be if it were  
thine,

Even thine, though few thy wants! — Roof,  
window, door,

The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,  
The roses to the porch which they entwine:  
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the  
day

On which it should be touched, would melt  
away.

"BELOVED VALE!" I SAID,  
"WHEN I SHALL CON"

1806. 1807

"BELOVED Vale!" I said, "when I shall con  
Those many records of my childish years,  
Remembrance of myself and of my peers  
Will press me down: to think of what is  
gone



Will be an awful thought, if life have one."  
 But, when into the Vale I came, no fears  
 Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped no  
 tears;  
 Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had  
 I none.  
 By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost  
 I stood, of simple shame the blushing  
 Thrall;  
 So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so  
 small!  
 A Juggler's balls old Time about him  
 tossed;  
 I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed;  
 and all  
 The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

"HOW SWEET IT IS, WHEN  
 MOTHER FANCY ROCKS"

1806. 1807

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks  
 The wayward brain, to saunter through a  
 wood!  
 An old place, full of many a lovely brood,  
 Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-  
 flowers in flocks;  
 And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,  
 Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks  
 At Wakes and Fairs with wandering  
 Mountebanks,—  
 When she stands cresting the Clown's head,  
 and mocks  
 The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,  
 Such place to me is sometimes like a dream  
 Or map of the whole world: thoughts, link  
 by link,  
 Enter through ears and eyesight, with such  
 gleam  
 Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,  
 And leap at once from the delicious stream.

"THOSE WORDS WERE UTTERED  
 AS IN PENSIVE MOOD"

1806. 1807

"— they are of the sky,  
 And from our earthly memory fade away."

THOSE words were uttered as in pensive  
 mood  
 We turned, departing from that solemn  
 sight:

A contrast and reproach to gross delight,  
 And life's unspiritual pleasures daily  
 wooed!

But now upon this thought I cannot brood;  
 It is unstable as a dream of night;  
 Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,  
 Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.  
 Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built  
 dome,  
 Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,  
 Find in the heart of man no natural home:  
 The immortal Mind craves objects that  
 endure:  
 These cleave to it; from these it cannot  
 roam,  
 Nor they from it: their fellowship is secure.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF  
 GRASMERE LAKE

1806. 1820

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars  
 Through the grey west; and lo! these  
 waters, steeled  
 By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield  
 A vivid repetition of the stars;  
 Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars  
 Amid his fellows beautifully revealed  
 At happy distance from earth's groaning  
 field,  
 Where ruthless mortals wage incessant  
 wars.  
 Is it a mirror? — or the nether Sphere  
 Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds  
 Her own calm fires? — But list! a voice is  
 near;  
 Great Pan himself low-whispering through  
 the reeds,  
 "Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy deeds  
 Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!"

"WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON,  
 THOU CLIMB'ST THE SKY"

1806. 1807

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou  
 climb'st the sky,  
 "How silently, and with how wan a face!"  
 Where art thou? Thou so often seen on  
 high  
 Running among the clouds a Wood-nymph's  
 race!

Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a  
 sigh  
 Which they would stifle, move at such a  
 pace !  
 The northern Wind, to call thee to the  
 chase,  
 Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I  
 The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should  
 be :  
 And all the stars, fast as the clouds were  
 riven,  
 Should sally forth, to keep thee company,  
 Hurrying and sparkling through the clear  
 blue heaven.  
 But, Cynthia ! should to thee the palm be  
 given,  
 Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

"THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH  
 WITH US ; LATE AND SOON "

1806. 1807

THE world is too much with us ; late and  
 soon,  
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
 powers :  
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
 boon !  
 The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping  
 flowers ;  
 For this, for everything, we are out of  
 tune ;  
 It moves us not. — Great God ! I 'd rather be  
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
 Have glimpses that would make me less  
 forlorn ;  
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

"WITH SHIPS THE SEA WAS  
 SPRINKLED FAR AND NIGH "

1806. 1807

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far and  
 nigh,  
 Like stars in heaven, and joyously it  
 showed ;

Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
 Some veering up and down, one knew not  
 why.

A goodly Vessel did I then espy  
 Come like a giant from a haven broad ;  
 And lustily along the bay she strode,  
 Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.  
 This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
 Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look ;  
 This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
 When will she turn, and whither ? She  
 will brook  
 No tarrying ; where She comes the winds  
 must stir :  
 On went She, and due north her journey  
 took.

"WHERE LIES THE LAND TO  
 WHICH YON SHIP' MUST GO ? "

1806. 1807

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship  
 must go ?  
 Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,  
 Festively she puts forth in trim array ;  
 Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?  
 What boots the inquiry ? — Neither friend  
 nor foe  
 She cares for ; let her travel where she may,  
 She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
 Ever before her, and a wind to blow.  
 Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?  
 And, almost as it was when ships were rare,  
 (From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and  
 there  
 Crossing the waters) doubt, and something  
 dark,  
 Of the old Sea some reverential fear,  
 Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark !

TO SLEEP

1806. 1807

O GENTLE SLEEP ! do they belong to thee,  
 These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost  
 love  
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,  
 A captive never wishing to be free.  
 This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to  
 me  
 A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove  
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above  
 Now on the water vexed with mockery.

I have no pain that calls for patience, no;  
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child:  
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my  
foe,  
Yet ever willing to be reconciled:  
O gentle Creature! do not use me so,  
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

## TO SLEEP

1806. 1807

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees  
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and  
seas,  
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and  
pure sky;  
I have thought of all by turns, and yet do  
lie  
Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melo-  
dies  
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard  
trees;  
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
Even thus last night, and two nights more,  
I lay,  
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any  
stealth:  
So do not let me wear to-night away:  
Without Thee what is all the morning's  
wealth?  
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous  
health!

## TO SLEEP

1806. 1807

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee,  
Sleep!  
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest  
names;  
The very sweetest, Fancy culls or frames,  
When thankfulness of heart is strong and  
deep!  
Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost  
steep  
In rich reward all suffering; Balm that  
tames  
All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and  
aims  
Takest away, and into souls dost creep,

Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,  
I surely not a man ungently made,  
Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is  
crossed?

Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,  
Mere slave of them who never for thee  
prayed,  
Still last to come where thou art wanted  
most!

TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM  
MICHAEL ANGELO, AND A  
TRANSLATION FROM THE  
LATIN OF THOMAS WARTON

(?). 1882

*Night speaks*

GRATEFUL is Sleep, my life in stone bound  
fast;

More grateful still: while wrong and shame  
shall last,

On me can Time no happier state bestow  
Than to be left unconscious of the woe.

Ah then, lest you awaken me, speak low.

GRATEFUL is Sleep, more grateful still to be  
Of marble; for while shameless wrong and  
woe

Prevail, 't is best to neither hear nor see.  
Then wake me not, I pray you. Hush,  
speak low.

COME, gentle Sleep, Death's image tho'  
thou art,

Come share my couch, nor speedily depart;  
How sweet thus living without life to lie,  
Thus without death how sweet it is to die.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL  
ANGELO

1806. 1807

Translations from Michael Angelo, done at  
the request of Mr. Duppa, whose acquaintance  
I made through Mr. Southey. Mr. Duppa was  
engaged in writing the life of Michael Angelo,  
and applied to Mr. Southey and myself to fur-  
nish some specimens of his poetic genius.

I

YES! hope may with my strong desire  
keep pace,  
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;

For if of our affections none finds grace  
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath  
God made  
The world which we inhabit? Better plea  
Love cannot have, than that in loving thee  
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,  
Who such divinity to thee imparts  
As hallows and makes pure all gentle  
hearts.  
His hope is treacherous only whose love  
dies  
With beauty, which is varying every hour;  
But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the  
power  
Of outward change, there blooms a death-  
less flower,  
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

FROM THE SAME

1806. 1807

II

No mortal object did these eyes behold  
When first they met the placid light of  
thine,  
And my Soul felt her destiny divine,  
And hope of endless peace in me grew bold:  
Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward  
course must hold;  
Beyond the visible world she soars to seek  
(For what delights the sense is false and  
weak)  
Ideal Form, the universal mould.  
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
In that which perishes: nor will he leyd  
His heart to aught which doth on time de-  
pend.  
'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true  
love,  
That kills the soul: love betters what is  
best,  
Even here below, but more in heaven above.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY  
CALVERT

1806. 1807

This young man, Raisley Calvert, to whom I  
was so much indebted, died at Penrith, 1795.

CALVERT! it must not be unheard by them  
Who may respect my name, that I to thee

Owed many years of early liberty.  
This care was thine when sickness did con-  
demn  
Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and  
stem—  
That I, if frugal and severe, might stray  
Where'er I liked; and finally array  
My temples with the Muse's diadem.  
Hence, if in freedom I have loved the  
truth;  
If there be aught of pure, or good, or  
great,  
In my past verse; or shall be, in the lays  
Of higher mood, which now I meditate;—  
It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived,  
Youth!  
To think how much of this will be thy  
praise.

"METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOT-  
STEPS OF A THRONE"

1806. 1807

The latter part of this Sonnet was a great  
favourite with my sister S. H. When I saw  
her lying in death, I could not resist the im-  
pulse to compose the Sonnet that follows it.

[See the editor's note.]

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a  
throne  
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes  
did shroud—  
Nor view of who might sit thereon al-  
lowed;  
But all the steps and ground about were  
strown  
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and  
bone  
Ever put on; a miserable crowd,  
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before  
that cloud,  
"Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we  
groan."  
Those steps I clomb; the mists before me  
gave  
Smooth way; and I beheld the face of one  
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,  
With her face up to heaven; that seemed  
to have  
Pleasing remembrance of a thought fore-  
gone;  
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!

## LINES

1806. 1807

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

LOUD is the Vale ! the Voice is up  
With which she speaks when storms are  
gone,  
A mighty unison of streams !  
Of all her Voices, One !

Loud is the Vale ; — this inland Depth  
In peace is roaring like the Sea ;  
Yon star upon the mountain-top  
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,  
Importunate and heavy load !  
The Comforter hath found me here,  
Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad —  
Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;  
For he must die who is their stay,  
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth  
To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;  
But when the great and good depart  
What is it more than this —

That Man, who is from God sent forth,  
Doth yet again to God return ? —  
Such ebb and flow must ever be,  
Then wherefore should we mourn ?

NOVEMBER 1806

1806. 1807

ANOTHER year ! — another deadly blow !  
Another mighty Empire overthrown !  
And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;  
The last that dare to struggle with the  
Foe.

'T is well ! from this day forward we shall  
know

That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;  
That by our own right hands it must be  
wrought ;

That we must stand unpropped, or be laid  
low.

O dastard whom such foretaste doth not  
cheer !

We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,  
Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,  
Who are to judge of danger which they  
fear,

And honour which they do not understand.

## ADDRESS TO A CHILD

DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING

BY MY SISTER

1806. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

WHAT way does the wind come ? What  
way does he go ?

He rides over the water, and over the snow,  
Through wood, and through vale ; and, o'er  
rocky height

Which the goat cannot climb, takes his  
sounding flight ;

He tosses about in every bare tree,  
As, if you look up, you plainly may see ;  
But how he will come, and whither he goes,  
There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook  
And ring a sharp 'larum ; — but, if you  
should look,

There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow  
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
And softer than if it were covered with silk.  
Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock ;  
— Yet seek him, — and what shall you find  
in the place ?

Nothing but silence and empty space ;  
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,  
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or  
thieves !

As soon as 't is daylight to-morrow, with me  
You shall go to the orchard, and then you  
will see

That he has been there, and made a great  
rout,

And cracked the branches, and strewn them  
about ;

Heaven grant that he spare but that one  
upright twig

That looked up at the sky so proud and big  
All last summer, as well you know,  
Studded with apples, a beautiful show !

Hark ! over the roof he makes a pause,  
And growls as if he would fix his claws  
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle  
Drive them down, like men in a battle: 31  
— But let him range round; he does us no  
harm,

We build up the fire, we're snug and warm;  
Untouched by his breath see the candle  
shines bright,

And burns with a clear and steady light;  
Books have we to read, — but that half-  
stified knell,

Alas ! 't is the sound of the eight o'clock  
bell.

— Come, now we'll to bed ! and when we  
are there

He may work his own will, and what shall  
we care ?

He may knock at the door, — we'll not let  
him in; 40

May drive at the windows, — we'll laugh at  
his din;

Let him seek his own home wherever it  
be;

Here's a cozie warm house for Edward and  
me.

## ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY  
FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD

1803-6. 1807

This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere —

"A simple child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death !" —

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same

way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines —

"Obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings ;" etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here: but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations: and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the "Immortality of the Soul," I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.

"The Child is Father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety."

1

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,  
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —

Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can  
see no more.

## II

The Rainbow comes and goes, 10  
And lovely is the Rose,  
The Moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath past away a glory from the  
earth.

## III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous  
song,  
And while the young lambs bound 20  
As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong:  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the  
steep;  
No more shall grief of mine the season  
wrong;  
I hear the Echoes through the mountains  
throng,  
The Winds come to me from the fields of  
sleep,  
And all the earth is gay;  
Land and sea 30  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every Beast keep holiday; —  
Thou Child of Joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
thou happy  
Shepherd-boy !

## IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call  
Ye to each other make; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
My heart is at your festival, 40  
My head hath its coronal,  
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it  
all.  
Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
While Earth herself is adorning,  
This sweet May-morning,  
And the Children are culling  
On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines  
warm,  
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's  
arm: — 50

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
— But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
A single Field which I have looked upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is  
gone:

The Pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat:  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

## V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting, 61  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it  
flows, 70  
He sees it in his joy;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

## VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a Mother's  
mind, 80  
And no unworthy aim,  
The homely Nurse doth all she can  
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

## VII

Behold the Child among his new-born  
blisses,  
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he  
lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,

With light upon him from his father's  
eyes !  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, <sup>90</sup>  
Some fragment from his dream of human  
life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;  
A wedding or a festival,  
A mourning or a funeral;  
And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song:  
Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
But it will not be long <sup>100</sup>  
Ere this be thrown aside,  
And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his "humorous  
stage"  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage;  
As if his whole vocation  
Were endless imitation.

## VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
Thy Soul's immensity; <sup>110</sup>  
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal  
deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, —  
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
A Presence which is not to be put by; <sup>121</sup>  
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's  
height,  
Why with such earnest pains dost thou  
provoke  
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?  
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly  
freight,  
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers <sup>130</sup>  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth  
breed

Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest —  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in  
his breast: —

Not for these I raise <sup>140</sup>  
The song of thanks and praise;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realised,  
High instincts before which our mortal  
Nature

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections, <sup>150</sup>  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to  
make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
To perish never;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-  
deavour,

Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy, <sup>160</sup>  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling ever-  
more.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous  
song !  
And let the young Lambs bound <sup>170</sup>  
As to the tabor's sound !  
We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-day  
Feel the gladness of the May !  
What though the radiance which was once  
so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour



Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
 We will grieve not, rather find 180  
 Strength in what remains behind;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be;  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering;  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !  
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;  
 I only have relinquished one delight 191  
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as  
 they;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
 Is lovely yet;  
 The Clouds that gather round the setting  
 sun  
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
 Another race hath been, and other palms 200  
 are won.  
 Thanks to the human heart by which we  
 live,  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows can  
 give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for  
 tears.

## A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY 1807

1807. 1807

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come  
 from you !  
 Thus in your books the record shall be  
 found,  
 "A watchword was pronounced, a potent  
 sound —  
 ARMINIUS! — all the people quaked like  
 dew  
 Stirred by the breeze; they rose, a Nation,  
 true,  
 True to herself — the mighty Germany,  
 She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,  
 She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.

All power was given her in the dreadful  
 trance;  
 Those new-born Kings he withered like a  
 flame."  
 — Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and  
 shame  
 To that Bavarian who could first advance  
 His banner in accursed league with France,  
 First open traitor to the German name !

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE  
SUBJUGATION OF SWITZER-  
LAND

1807. 1807

This was composed while pacing to and fro  
 between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding,  
 and the principal Farm-house of the Estate, in  
 which we lived for nine or ten months. I will  
 here mention that the Song on the Restoration  
 of Lord Clifford, as well as that on the feast of  
 Brougham Castle, were produced on the same  
 ground.

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,  
 One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:  
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !  
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
 Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly  
 striven:  
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art  
 driven,  
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been be-  
 reft:  
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is  
 left;  
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would  
 it be  
 That Mountain floods should thunder as be-  
 fore,  
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

## TO THOMAS CLARKSON

ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL  
 FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE  
 TRADE

1807. 1807

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to  
 climb:  
 How toilsome — nay, how dire — it was, by  
 thee

Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly:  
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent  
     prime,  
 Didst first lead forth that enterprise sub-  
     lime,  
 Hast heard the constant Voice its charge  
     repeat,  
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular  
     seat,  
 First roused thee. — O true yoke-fellow of  
     Time,  
 Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm  
 Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !  
 The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;  
 And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's  
     calm,  
 A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find  
 Repose at length, firm friend of human  
     kind !

## THE MOTHER'S RETURN

BY MY SISTER

1807. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is past  
 Since your dear Mother went away, —  
 And she to-morrow will return;  
 To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings ! thought of joy !  
 The eldest heard with steady glee;  
 Silent he stood; then laughed again, —  
 And shouted, " Mother, come to me."

Louder and louder did he shout,  
 With witless hope to bring her near; 10  
 " Nay, patience ! patience, little boy !  
 Your tender mother cannot hear."

I told of hills, and far-off towns,  
 And long, long vales to travel through; —  
 He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,  
 But he submits; what can he do ?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast;  
 She wars not with the mystery  
 Of time and distance, night and day;  
 The bonds of our humanity. 20

Her joy is like an instinct, joy  
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly;

She dances, runs without an aim,  
 She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,  
 And echoes back his sister's glee;  
 They hug the infant in my arms,  
 As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,  
 We rested in the garden bower; 30  
 While sweetly shone the evening sun  
 In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done, —  
 Our rambles by the swift brook's side  
 Far as the willow-skirted pool,  
 Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,  
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,  
 Of birds that build their nests and sing,  
 And all " since Mother went away !" 40

To her these tales they will repeat,  
 To her our new-born tribes will show,  
 The goslings green, the ass's colt,  
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

— But, see, the evening star comes forth !  
 To bed the children must depart;  
 A moment's heaviness they feel,  
 A sadness at the heart:

'T is gone — and in a merry fit  
 They run upstairs in gamesome race; 50  
 I, too, infected by their mood,  
 I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past — and, O the change !  
 Asleep upon their beds they lie;  
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,  
 And closed the sparkling eye.

## GIPSIES

1807. 1807

Composed at Coleorton. I had observed  
 them, as here described, near Castle Donning-  
 ton, on my way to and from Derby.

YET are they here the same unbroken knot  
 Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !  
 Men, women, children, yea the frame  
 Of the whole spectacle the same !  
 Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,  
 Now deep and red, the colouring of night;

That on their Gipsy-faces falls,  
 Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.  
 — Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours  
 are gone, while I  
 Have been a traveller under open sky,  
 Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
 Yet as I left I find them here !  
 The weary Sun betook himself to rest; —  
 Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,  
 Outshining like a visible God  
 The glorious path in which he trod.  
 And now, ascending, after one dark hour  
 And one night's diminution of her power,  
 Behold the mighty Moon ! this way  
 She looks as if at them — but they  
 Regard not her: — oh better wrong and  
 strife  
 (By nature transient) than this torpid life;  
 Life which the very stars reprove  
 As on their silent tasks they move !  
 Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !  
 In scorn I speak not; — they are what their  
 birth  
 And breeding suffer them to be;  
 Wild outcasts of society !

"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU  
 SURELY ART"

1807. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. (*Mrs. W.*  
*says in a note — "AT COLEORTON."*)

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art  
 A creature of a "fiery heart"; —  
 These notes of thine — they pierce and  
 pierce;  
 Tumultuous harmony and fiercer !  
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine  
 Had helped thee to a Valentine;  
 A song in mockery and despite  
 Of shades, and dews, and silent night;  
 And steady bliss, and all the loves  
 Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
 His homely tale, this very day;  
 His voice was buried among trees,  
 Yet to be come at by the breeze:  
 He did not cease; but cooed — and cooed;  
 And somewhat pensively he wooed:  
 He sang of love, with quiet blending,  
 Slow to begin, and never ending;  
 Of serious faith, and inward glee;  
 That was the song — the song for me !

TO LADY BEAUMONT

1807. 1807

The winter garden of Coleorton, fashioned  
 out of an old quarry under the superintendence  
 and direction of Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister  
 Dorothy, during the winter and spring we  
 resided there.

LADY ! the songs of Spring were in the  
 grove  
 While I was shaping beds for winter  
 flowers;  
 While I was planting green unfading  
 bowers,  
 And shrubs — to hang upon the warm al-  
 cove,  
 And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy  
 wove  
 The dream, to time and nature's blended  
 powers  
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,  
 A labyrinth, Lady ! which your feet shall  
 rove.  
 Yes ! when the sun of life more feebly  
 shines,  
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn  
 gloom  
 Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;  
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring  
 pines  
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom  
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

"THOUGH NARROW BE THAT  
 OLD MAN'S CARES"

1807. 1807

" — gives to airy nothing  
 A local habitation and a name."

Written at Coleorton. This old man's name  
 was Mitchell. He was, in all his ways and con-  
 versation, a great curiosity, both individually  
 and as a representative of past times. His chief  
 employment was keeping watch at night by  
 pacing round the house, at that time building,  
 to keep off depredators. He has often told me  
 gravely of having seen the Seven Whistlers and  
 the Hounds as here described. Among the  
 groves of Coleorton, where I became familiar  
 with the habits and notions of old Mitchell,  
 there was also a labourer of whom, I regret, I  
 had no personal knowledge; for, more than  
 forty years after, when he was become an old  
 man, I learnt that while I was composing  
 verses, which I usually did aloud, he took

much pleasure, unknown to me, in following my steps that he might catch the words I uttered; and, what is not a little remarkable, several lines caught in this way kept their place in his memory. My volumes have lately been given to him by my informant, and surely he must have been gratified to meet in print his old acquaintances.

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's cares,  
and near,

The poor old Man is greater than he seems:  
For he hath waking empire, wide as  
dreams;

An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.  
Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer;  
The region of his inner spirit teems  
With vital sounds and monitory gleams  
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.

He the seven birds hath seen, that never  
part,

Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly  
rounds,

And counted them: and oftentimes will  
start—

For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S  
HOUNDS

Doomed, with their impious Lord, the  
flying Hart

To chase for ever, on aerial grounds!

## SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIF-  
FORD, THE SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES  
AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS

1807. 1807

This poem was composed at Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along the path that led from Sir George Beaumont's Farm-house, where we resided, to the Hall which was building at that time.

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel  
sate,

And Emont's murmur mingled with the  
Song.—

The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
A festal strain that hath been silent  
long:—

“From town to town, from tower to tower,  
The red rose is a gladsome flower.  
Her thirty years of winter past,  
The red rose is revived at last;

She lifts her head for endless spring,  
For everlasting blossoming: 10

Both roses flourish, red and white:

In love and sisterly delight

The two that were at strife are blended,

And all old troubles now are ended.—

Joy! joy to both! but most to her

Who is the flower of Lancaster!

Behold her how She smiles to-day

On this great throng, this bright array!

Fair greeting doth she send to all

From every corner of the hall; 20

But chiefly from above the board

Where sits in state our rightful Lord,

A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield,

And it was proved in Bosworth-field.

Not long the Avenger was withstood—

Earth helped him with the cry of blood:

St. George was for us, and the might

Of blessed Angels crowned the right.

Loud voice the Land has uttered forth, 30

We loudest in the faithful north:

Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,

Our streams proclaim a welcoming;

Our strong-abodes and castles see

The glory of their loyalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour—

Though lonely, a deserted Tower;

Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and  
groom:

We have them at the feast of Brough'm.

How glad Pen-drakon—though the sleep 40

Of years be on her!—She shall reap

A taste of this great pleasure, viewing

As in a dream her own renewing.

Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem

Beside her little humble stream;

And she that keepeth watch and ward

Her statelier Eden's course to guard;

They both are happy at this hour,

Though each is but a lonely Tower:—

But here is perfect joy and pride 50

For one fair House by Emont's side,

This day, distinguished without peer

To see her Master and to cheer—

Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

Oh! it was a time forlorn

When the fatherless was born—

Give her wings that she may fly,

Or she sees her infant die!

Swords that are with slaughter wild

Hunt the Mother and the Child. 60

Who will take them from the light?

—Yonder is a man in sight—

Yonder is a house — but where ?  
 No, they must not enter there.  
 To the caves, and to the brooks,  
 To the clouds of heaven she looks;  
 She is speechless, but her eyes  
 Pray in ghostly agonies.  
 Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
 Maid and Mother undefiled,  
 Save a Mother and her Child !

70

Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
 On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy ?  
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that  
 pass

Light as the wind along the grass.  
 Can this be He who hither came  
 In secret, like a smothered flame ?  
 O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
 For shelter, and a poor man's bread !  
 God loves the Child; and God hath willed so  
 That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
 The Lady's words, when forced away,  
 The last she to her Babe did say:  
 'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
 I may not be; but rest thee, rest,  
 For lowly shepherd's life is best !'

Alas ! when evil men are strong  
 No life is good, no pleasure long.  
 The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,  
 And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, 90  
 And quit the flowers that summer brings  
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;  
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
 — Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !  
 Hear it, good man, old in days !  
 Thou tree of covert and of rest  
 For this young Bird that is distressed;  
 Among thy branches safe he lay,  
 And he was free to sport and play, 100  
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear !  
 I said, when evil men are strong,  
 No life is good, no pleasure long,  
 A weak and cowardly untruth !  
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
 And thankful through a weary time,  
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
 — Again he wanders forth at will, 110  
 And tends a flock from hill to hill:  
 His garb is humble; ne'er was seen  
 Such garb with such a noble mien;  
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate  
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state !  
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,

Nor yet for higher sympathy.  
 To his side the fallow-deer  
 Came, and rested without fear;  
 The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120  
 Stooped down to pay him fealty;  
 And both the undying fish that swim  
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;  
 The pair were servants of his eye  
 In their immortality;  
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,  
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.  
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt  
 Upon the mountains visitant;  
 He hath kenned them taking wing: 130  
 And into caves where Faeries sing  
 He hath entered; and been told  
 By Voices how men lived of old.  
 Among the heavens his eye can see  
 The face of thing that is to be;  
 And, if that men report him right,  
 His tongue could whisper words of might.  
 — Now another day is come,  
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;  
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140  
 And hath buried deep his book;  
 Armour rusting in his halls  
 On the blood of Clifford calls; —  
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance —  
 Bear me to the heart of France,  
 Is the longing of the Shield —  
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;  
 Field of death, where'er thou be,  
 Groan thou with our victory !  
 Happy day, and mighty hour, 150  
 When our Shepherd, in his power,  
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
 To his ancestors restored  
 Like a re-appearing Star,  
 Like a glory from afar,  
 First shall head the flock of war !"

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not  
 know  
 How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's  
 heart was framed,  
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and  
 tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men  
 lie;  
 His daily teachers had been woods and  
 rills,  
 The silence that is in the starry sky,  
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,  
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were  
     dead:  
 Nor did he change; but kept in lofty  
     place  
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth;  
 The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and  
     more; 170  
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
 "The good Lord Clifford" was the name  
     he bore.

## THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

## OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS

1807. 1815

The earlier half of this Poem was composed at Stockton-upon-Tees, when Mrs. Wordsworth and I were on a visit to her eldest Brother, Mr. Hutchinson, at the close of the year 1807. The country is flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under the shelter of a row of stacks in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured forth my verses aloud as freely as they would come. Mrs. Wordsworth reminds me that her brother stood upon the punctilio of not sitting down to dinner till I joined the party; and it frequently happened that I did not make my appearance till too late, so that she was made uncomfortable. I here beg her pardon for this and similar transgressions during the whole course of our wedded life. To my beloved Sister the same apology is due.

When, from the visit just mentioned, we returned to Town-end, Grasmere, I proceeded with the Poem; and it may be worth while to note, as a caution to others who may cast their eye on these memoranda, that the skin having been rubbed off my heel by my wearing too tight a shoe, though I desisted from walking I found that the irritation of the wounded part was kept up, by the act of composition, to a degree that made it necessary to give my constitution a holiday. A rapid cure was the consequence. Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in composition, has throughout my life brought on more or less bodily derangement. Nevertheless, I am, at the close of my seventy-third year, in what may be called excellent health; so that intellectual labour is not necessarily unfavourable to longevity. But perhaps I ought here to add that mine has been generally carried on out of doors.

Let me here say a few words of this Poem in the way of criticism. The subject being taken from feudal times has led to its being compared to some of Walter Scott's poems that belong to the same age and state of society. The comparison is inconsiderate. Sir Walter pursued the customary and very natural course of conducting an action, presenting various turns of fortune, to some outstanding point on which the mind might rest as a termination or catastrophe. The course I attempted to pursue is entirely different. Everything that is attempted by the principal personages in "The White Doe" fails, so far as its object is external and substantial. So far as it is moral and spiritual it succeeds. The Heroine of the Poem knows that her duty is not to interfere with the current of events, either to forward or delay them, but

"To abide  
 The shock, and finally secure  
 O'er pain and grief a triumph pure."

This she does in obedience to her brother's injunction, as most suitable to a mind and character that, under previous trials, had been proved to accord with his. She achieves this not without aid from the communication with the inferior Creature, which often leads her thoughts to revolve upon the past with a tender and humanising influence that exalts rather than depresses her. The anticipated beatification, if I may so say, of her mind, and the apotheosis of the companion of her solitude, are the points at which the Poem aims, and constitute its legitimate catastrophe, far too spiritual a one for instant or widely-spread sympathy, but not therefore the less fitted to make a deep and permanent impression upon that class of minds who think and feel more independently, than the many do, of the surfaces of things and interests transitory because belonging more to the outward and social forms of life than to its internal spirit. How insignificant a thing, for example, does personal prowess appear, compared with the fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom; in other words, with struggles for the sake of principle, in preference to victory gloried in for its own sake.

## ADVERTISEMENT

During the Summer of 1807 I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of "The White Doe," founded upon a Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

## DEDICATION

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,  
And, MARY! oft beside our blazing fire,  
When years of wedded life were as a day  
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,  
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay  
How Una, sad of soul — in sad attire,  
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,  
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovéd! pleasing was the smart,  
And the tear precious in compassion shed  
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,  
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited,  
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart  
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led, —  
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,  
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell  
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;  
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,  
And all its finer inspiration caught,  
Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell,  
We by a lamentable change were taught  
That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide:"  
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,  
For us the voice of melody was mute.  
— But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,  
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,  
Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow  
A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,  
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content  
From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us — it beguiled us — then, to hear  
Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;  
And griefs whose airy motion comes not near  
The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:  
Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,  
High over hill and low adown the dell  
Again we wandered, willing to partake  
All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song of mine once more could please,  
Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,  
Is tempered and allayed by sympathies  
Aloft ascending, and descending deep,  
Even to the inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees  
Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep  
Of the sharp winds; — fair Creatures! — to whom  
Heaven  
A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks  
Of female patience winning firm repose;  
And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,  
A bright, encouraging, example shows;  
Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,  
Needful amid life's ordinary woes; —  
Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless  
A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,  
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive:  
Oh, that my mind were equal to fulfil  
The comprehensive mandate which they give — 60  
Vain aspiration of an earnest will!  
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,  
Belovéd Wife! such solace to impart  
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
April 20, 1815.

"Action is transitory — a step, a blow,  
The motion of a muscle — this way or that —  
'Tis done; and in the after-vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And has the nature of infinity.  
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem  
And irremovable) gracious openings lie,  
By which the soul — with patient steps of thought  
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer —  
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds  
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent  
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine."

"They that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility: for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his Body; and if he be not of kinn to God by his Spirit, he is a base, ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature: for take an example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

## CANTO FIRST

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower  
The bells ring loud with gladsome power;  
The sun shines bright; the fields are gay  
With people in their best array  
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,  
Along the banks of crystal Wharf,  
Through the Vale retired and lowly,  
Trooping to that summons holy.  
And, up among the moorlands, see  
What sprinklings of blithe company! 10  
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,  
That down the steep hills force their way,  
Like cattle through the budded brooms;  
Path, or no path, what care they?  
And thus in joyous mood they hie  
To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there? — Full fifty  
years  
That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,  
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste  
The bitterness of wrong and waste: 20  
Its courts are ravaged; but the tower  
Is standing with a voice of power,  
That ancient voice which wont to call  
To mass or some high festival;  
And in the shattered fabric's heart  
Remaineth one protected part;  
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,  
Closely embowered and trimly drest;  
And thither young and old repair,  
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer. 30  
Fast the churchyard fills; — anon  
Look again, and they all are gone;  
The cluster round the porch, and the folk  
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!  
And scarcely have they disappeared  
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard: —  
With one consent the people rejoice,  
Filling the church with a lofty voice!  
They sing a service which they feel:  
For 't is the sunrise now of zeal; 40  
Of a pure faith the vernal prime —  
In great Eliza's golden time.  
A moment ends the fervent din,  
And all is hushed, without and within;  
For though the priest, more tranquilly,  
Recites the holy liturgy,  
The only voice which you can hear  
Is the river murmuring near.  
— When soft! — the dusky trees between,  
And down the path through the open green,  
Where is no living thing to be seen; 50  
And through yon gateway, where is found,  
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
Free entrance to the churchyard ground —  
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,  
Comes gliding in serene and slow,  
Soft and silent as a dream,  
A solitary Doe!  
White she is as lily of June,  
And beauteous as the silver moon 60  
When out of sight the clouds are driven  
And she is left alone in heaven;  
Or like a ship some gentle day  
In sunshine sailing far away,  
A glittering ship, that hath the plain  
Of ocean for her own domain.  
Lie silent in your graves, ye dead!  
Lie quiet in your churchyard bed!  
Ye living, tend your holy cares;  
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers; 70

And blame not me if my heart and sight  
Are occupied with one delight!  
'T is a work for sabbath hours  
If I with this bright Creature go:  
Whether she be of forest bowers,  
From the bowers of earth below;  
Or a Spirit for one day given,  
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.  
What harmonious pensive changes  
Wait upon her as she ranges 80  
Round and through this Pile of state  
Overthrown and desolate!  
Now a step or two her way  
Leads through space of open day,  
Where the enamoured sunny light  
Brightens her that was so bright;  
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,  
Falls upon her like a breath,  
From some lofty arch or wall,  
As she passes underneath: 90  
Now some gloomy nook partakes  
Of the glory that she makes, —  
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,  
With perfect cunning framed as well  
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread  
Of the elder's bushy head;  
Some jealous and forbidding cell,  
That doth the living stars repel,  
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.  
The presence of this wandering Doe 100  
Fills many a damp obscure recess  
With lustre of a saintly show;  
And, reappearing, she no less  
Sheds on the flowers that round her blow  
A more than sunny liveliness.  
But say, among these holy places,  
Which thus assiduously she paces,  
Comes she with a votary's task,  
Rite to perform, or boon to ask?  
Fair Pilgrim! harbours she a sense 110  
Of sorrow, or of reverence?  
Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,  
Crushed as if by wrath divine?  
For what survives of house where God  
Was worshipped, or where Man abode;  
For old magnificence undone;  
Or for the gentler work begun  
By Nature, softening and concealing,  
And busy with a hand of healing?  
Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth 120  
That to the sapling ash gives birth;  
For dormitory's length laid bare  
Where the wild rose blossoms fair;  
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,  
Now rich with mossy ornament?



— She sees a warrior carved in stone,  
Among the thick weeds, stretched alone;  
A warrior, with his shield of pride  
Cleaving humbly to his side,  
And hands in resignation prest, 130  
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast;  
As little she regards the sight  
As a common creature might:  
If she be doomed to inward care,  
Or service, it must lie elsewhere.

— But hers are eyes serenely bright,  
And on she moves — with pace how light !  
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste  
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown;  
And thus she fares, until at last 140  
Beside the ridge of a grassy grave  
In quietness she lays her down;  
Gentle as a weary wave  
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died  
Against an anchored vessel's side;  
Even so, without distress, doth she  
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,  
To a lingering motion bound,  
Like the crystal stream now flowing 150  
With its softest summer sound:  
So the balmy minutes pass,  
While this radiant Creature lies  
Couched upon the dewy grass,  
Pensively with downcast eyes.  
— But now again the people raise  
With awful cheer a voice of praise;  
It is the last, the parting song;  
And from the temple forth they throng,  
And quickly spread themselves abroad, 160  
While each pursues his several road.  
But some — a variegated band  
Of middle-aged, and old, and young,  
And little children by the hand  
Upon their leading mothers hung —  
With mute obeisance gladly paid  
Turn towards the spot, where, full in view,  
The white Doe, to her service true,  
Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound; 170  
Which two spears' length of level ground  
Did from all other graves divide:  
As if in some respect of pride;  
Or melancholy's sickly mood,  
Still shy of human neighbourhood;  
Or guilt, that humbly would express  
A penitential loneliness.

“Look, there she is, my Child! draw  
near;

She fears not, wherefore should we fear ?

She means no harm;” — but still the  
Boy, 180

To whom the words were softly said,  
Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for  
joy,

A shame-faced blush of glowing red !  
Again the Mother whispered low,  
“Now you have seen the famous Doe;  
From Rylstone she hath found her way  
Over the hills this sabbath day;  
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,  
And she will depart when we are gone;  
Thus doth she keep, from year to year, 190  
Her sabbath morning, foul or fair.”

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams  
The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;  
But is she truly what she seems ?

He asks with insecure delight,  
Asks of himself, and doubts, — and still  
The doubt returns against his will:  
Though he, and all the standers-by,  
Could tell a tragic history

Of facts divulged, wherein appear 200  
Substantial motive, reason clear,  
Why thus the milk-white Doe is found  
Couchant beside that lonely mound;  
And why she duly loves to pace  
The circuit of this hallowed place.  
Nor to the Child's inquiring mind  
Is such perplexity confined:

For, spite of sober Truth that sees  
A world of fixed remembrances  
Which to this mystery belong, 210  
If, undeceived, my skill can trace  
The characters of every face,  
There lack not strange delusion here,  
Conjecture vague, and idle fear,  
And superstitious fancies strong,  
Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire —  
Who in his boyhood often fed  
Full cheerily on convent-bread  
And heard old tales by the convent-fire, 220  
And to his grave will go with scars,  
Relies of long and distant wars —  
That Old Man, studious to expound  
The spectacle, is mounting high  
To days of dim antiquity;  
When Lady Aëliza mourned  
Her Son, and felt in her despair  
The pang of unavailing prayer;  
Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,  
The noble Boy of Egremound. 230  
From which affliction — when the grace  
Of God had in her heart found place —

A pious structure, fair to see,  
Rose up, this stately Priory !  
The Lady's work ; — but now laid low ;  
To the grief of her soul that doth come

and go,  
In the beautiful form of this innocent  
Doe :

Which, though seemingly doomed in its  
breast to sustain

A softened remembrance of sorrow and  
pain,

Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and  
bright ;

And glides o'er the earth like an angel of  
light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door ;  
And, through the chink in the fractured  
floor

Look down, and see a griesly sight ;  
A vault where the bodies are buried up-  
right !

There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand ;  
And, in his place, among son and sire,  
Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,  
A valiant man, and a name of dread

In the ruthless wars of the White and Red ;  
Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Ban-  
bury church

And smote off his head on the stones of  
the porch !

Look down among them, if you dare ;  
Oft does the White Doe loiter there,  
Prying into the darksome rent ;  
Nor can it be with good intent :

So thinks that Dame of haughty air,  
Who hath a Page her book to hold,  
And wears a frontlet edged with gold.

Harsh thoughts with her high mood  
agree —

Who counts among her ancestry  
Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously !

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,  
From Oxford come to his native vale,  
He also hath his own conceit :

It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,  
Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet  
In his wanderings solitary :

Wild notes she in his hearing sang,  
A song of Nature's hidden powers ;  
That whistled like the wind, and rang  
Among the rocks and holly bowers.

'T was said that She all shapes could wear ;  
And oftentimes before him stood,  
Amid the trees of some thick wood,

In semblance of a lady fair ;  
And taught him signs, and showed him  
sights,

In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights ;  
When under cloud of fear he lay,  
A shepherd clad in homely grey ;  
Nor left him at his later day.

And hence, when he, with spear and shield,  
Rode full of years to Flodden-field,  
His eye could see the hidden spring,

And how the current was to flow ;  
The fatal end of Scotland's King,  
And all that hopeless overthrow.

But not in wars did he delight,  
*This* Clifford wished for worthier might ;  
Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state ;

Him his own thoughts did elevate, —  
Most happy in the shy recess  
Of Barden's lowly quietness.

And choice of studious friends had he  
Of Bolton's dear fraternity ;

Who, standing on this old church tower,  
In many a calm propitious hour,

Perused, with him, the starry sky ;  
Or, in their cells, with him did pry

For other lore, — by keen desire  
Urged to close toil with chemic fire ;

In quest belike of transmutations  
Rich as the mine's most bright creations.

But they and their good works are fled,  
And all is now disquieted —

And peace is none, for living or dead !  
Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,

But look again at the radiant Doe !  
What quiet watch she seems to keep,

Alone, beside that grassy heap !  
Why mention other thoughts unmeet  
For vision so composed and sweet ?

While stand the people in a ring,  
Gazing, doubting, questioning ;

Yea, many overcome in spite  
Of recollections clear and bright ;

Which yet do unto some impart  
An undisturbed repose of heart.

And all the assembly own a law  
Of orderly respect and awe ;

But see — they vanish one by one,  
And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled  
By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild ;

To which, with no reluctant strings,  
Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;

And now before this Pile we stand  
In solitude, and utter peace :

But, Harp ! thy murmurs may not cease —

A Spirit, with his angelic wings, 331  
In soft and breeze-like visitings,  
Has touched thee — and a Spirit's hand:  
A voice is with us — a command  
To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,  
A tale of tears, a mortal story!

## CANTO SECOND

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed;  
And first we sang of the greenwood shade  
And a solitary Maid;  
Beginning, where the song must end,  
With her, and with her sylvan Friend;  
The Friend who stood before her sight,  
Her only unextinguished light;  
Her last companion in a dearth  
Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was — this Maid, who wrought  
Meekly, with foreboding thought, 11  
In vermeil colours and in gold  
An unblest work; which, standing by,  
Her Father did with joy behold, —  
Exulting in its imagery;  
A Banner, fashioned to fulfil  
Too perfectly his headstrong will:  
For on this Banner had her hand  
Embroidered (such her Sire's command)  
The sacred Cross; and figured there 20  
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear;  
Full soon to be uplifted high,  
And float in rueful company!

It was the time when England's Queen  
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign  
dread;

Nor yet the restless crown had been  
Disturbed upon her virgin head;  
But now the inly-working North  
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,  
A potent vassalage, to fight 30  
In Percy's and in Neville's right,  
Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,  
Who gave their wishes open vent;  
And boldly urged a general plea,  
The rites of ancient piety  
To be triumphantly restored,  
By the stern justice of the sword!  
And that same Banner, on whose breast  
The blameless Lady had exprest  
Memorials chosen to give life 40  
And sunshine to a dangerous strife;  
That Banner, waiting for the Call,  
Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

He came; and Francis Norton said,  
"O Father! rise not in this fray —

The hairs are white upon your head;  
Dear Father, hear me when I say  
It is for you too late a day!  
Bethink you of your own good name:  
A just and gracious Queen have we, 50  
A pure religion, and the claim  
Of peace on our humanity. —  
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn;  
I am your son, your eldest born;  
But not for lordship or for land,  
My Father, do I clasp your knees;  
The Banner touch not, stay your hand,  
This multitude of men disband,  
And live at home in blameless ease;  
For these my brethren's sake, for me; 60  
And, most of all, for Emily!"

Tumultuous noises filled the hall;  
And scarcely could the Father hear  
That name — pronounced with a dying  
fall —

The name of his only Daughter dear,  
As on the banner which stood near  
He glanced a look of holy pride,  
And his moist eyes were glorified;  
Then did he seize the staff, and say:  
"Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,  
Keep thou this ensign till the day 71  
When I of thee require the same:  
Thy place be on my better hand; —  
And seven as true as thou, I see,  
Will cleave to this good cause and me."  
He spake, and eight brave sons straightway  
All followed him, a gallant band!

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came  
The sight was hailed with loud acclaim  
And din of arms and minstrelsy, 80  
From all his warlike tenantry,  
All horsed and harnessed with him to  
ride, —

A voice to which the hills replied!  
But Francis, in the vacant hall,  
Stood silent under dreary weight, —  
A phantasm, in which roof and wall  
Shook, tottered, swam before his sight;  
A phantasm like a dream of night!  
Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,  
He found his way to a postern-gate; 90  
And, when he waked, his languid eye  
Was on the calm and silent sky;  
With air about him breathing sweet,  
And earth's green grass beneath his feet;  
Nor did he fail ere long to hear  
A sound of military cheer,  
Faint — but it reached that sheltered spot;  
He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance  
Which he had grasped unknowingly, 100  
Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,  
That dimness of heart-agony;  
There stood he, cleansed from the despair  
And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.  
The past he calmly hath reviewed:  
But where will be the fortitude  
Of this brave man, when he shall see  
That Form beneath the spreading tree,  
And know that it is Emily?

He saw her where in open view 110  
She sate beneath the spreading yew —  
Her head upon her lap, concealing  
In solitude her bitter feeling:  
"Might ever son *command* a sire,  
The act were justified to-day."  
This to himself — and to the Maid,  
Whom now he had approached, he said —  
"Gone are they, — they have their desire;  
And I with thee one hour will stay,  
To give thee comfort if I may." 120

She heard, but looked not up, nor spake;  
And sorrow moved him to partake  
Her silence; then his thoughts turned  
round,

And fervent words a passage found.  
"Gone are they, bravely, though mis-  
led;

With a dear Father at their head!  
The Sons obey a natural lord;  
The Father had given solemn word  
To noble Percy; and a force  
Still stronger, bends him to his course. 130  
This said, our tears to-day may fall  
As at an innocent funeral.

In deep and awful channel runs  
This sympathy of Sire and Sons;  
Untried our Brothers have been loved  
With heart by simple nature moved;  
And now their faithfulness is proved:  
For faithful we must call them, bearing  
That soul of conscientious daring.  
— There were they all in circle — there 140

Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,  
John with a sword that will not fail,  
And Marmaduke in fearless mail,  
And those bright Twins were side by side;  
And there, by fresh hopes beautified,  
Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power  
Of man, our youngest, fairest flower!  
I, by the right of eldest born,  
And in a second father's place,  
Presumed to grapple with their scorn, 150  
And meet their pity face to face;

Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,  
I to my Father knelt and prayed;  
And one, the pensive Marmaduke,  
Methought, was yielding inwardly,  
And would have laid his purpose by,  
But for a glance of his Father's eye,  
Which I myself could scarcely brook.

Then be we, each and all, forgiven!  
Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear, 160  
Whose pangs are registered in heaven —  
The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,  
And smiles, that dared to take their place,  
Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,  
As that unhallowed Bamer grew  
Beneath a loving old Man's view.  
Thy part is done — thy painful part;  
Be thou then satisfied in heart!

A further, though far easier, task  
Than thine hath been, my duties ask; 170  
With theirs my efforts cannot blend,  
I cannot for such cause contend;  
Their aims I utterly forswear;  
But I in body will be there.  
Unarmed and naked will I go,  
Be at their side, come weal or woe:  
On kind occasions I may wait,  
See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.  
Bare breast I take and an empty hand."  
Therewith he threw away the lance, 180  
Which he had grasped in that strong  
trance,

Spurned it, like something that would  
stand

Between him and the pure intent  
Of love on which his soul was bent.

"For thee, for thee, is left the sense  
Of trial past without offence  
To God or man; such innocence,  
Such consolation, and the excess  
Of an unmerited distress;  
In that thy very strength must lie. 190  
— O Sister, I could prophesy!

The time is come that rings the knell  
Of all we loved, and loved so well:  
Hope nothing, if I thus may speak  
To thee, a woman, and thence weak:  
Hope nothing, I repeat; for we  
Are doomed to perish utterly:  
'Tis meet that thou with me divide  
The thought while I am by thy side,  
Acknowledging a grace in this, 200  
A comfort in the dark abyss.

But look not for me when I am gone,  
And be no farther wrought upon:  
Farewell all wishes, all debate,

All prayers for this cause, or for that !  
 Weep, if that aid thee; but depend  
 Upon no help of outward friend;  
 Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave  
 To fortitude without reprieve.  
 For we must fall, both we and ours — 210  
 This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead,  
 hall —

Our fate is theirs, will reach them all;  
 The young horse must forsake his manger,  
 And learn to glory in a Stranger;  
 The hawk forget his perch; the hound  
 Be parted from his ancient ground:  
 The blast will sweep us all away —  
 One desolation, one decay !  
 And even this Creature ! ” which words say-  
 ing, 220

He pointed to a lovely Doe,  
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying;  
 Fair creature, and more white than snow !  
 “ Even she will to her peaceful woods  
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,  
 And be in heart and soul the same  
 She was before she hither came;  
 Ere she had learned to love us all,  
 Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.  
 — But thou, my Sister, doomed to be 230  
 The last leaf on a blasted tree;  
 If not in vain we breathed the breath  
 Together of a purer faith;  
 If hand in hand we have been led,  
 And thou, (O happy thought this day!)  
 Not seldom foremost in the way;  
 If on one thought our minds have fed,  
 And we have in one meaning read;  
 If, when at home our private weal  
 Hath suffered from the shock of zeal, 240  
 Together we have learned to prize  
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice;  
 If we like combatants have fared,  
 And for this issue been prepared;  
 If thou art beautiful, and youth  
 And thought endue thee with all truth —  
 Be strong; — be worthy of the grace  
 Of God, and fill thy destined place:  
 A Soul, by force of sorrows high,  
 Uplifted to the purest sky 250  
 Of undisturbed humanity ! ”

He ended, — or she heard no more;  
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,  
 And at the mansion’s silent door,  
 He kissed the consecrated Maid;  
 And down the valley then pursued,  
 Alone, the armed Multitude.

## CANTO THIRD

Now joy for you who from the towers  
 Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,  
 Telling melancholy hours !  
 Proclaim it, let your Masters hear  
 That Norton with his band is near !  
 The watchmen from their station high  
 Pronounced the word, — and the Earls de-  
 sery,

Well-pleased, the armed Company  
 Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair 10  
 Gone forth to greet him on the plain —  
 “ This meeting, noble Lords ! looks fair,  
 I bring with me a goodly train;  
 Their hearts are with you: hill and dale  
 Have helped us: Ure we crossed, and Swale,  
 And horse and harness followed — see  
 The best part of their Yeomanry !  
 — Stand forth, my Sons ! — these eight are  
 mine,

Whom to this service I commend;  
 Which way so’er our fate incline, 20  
 These will be faithful to the end;  
 They are my all ” — voice failed him  
 here —

“ My all save one, a Daughter dear !  
 Whom I have left, Love’s mildest birth,  
 The meekest Child on this blessed earth.  
 I had — but these are by my side,  
 These Eight, and this is a day of pride !  
 The time is ripe. With festive din  
 Lo ! how the people are flocking in, —  
 Like hungry fowl to the feeder’s hand 30  
 When snow lies heavy upon the land.”

He spake bare truth; for far and near  
 From every side came noisy swarms  
 Of Peasants in their homely gear;  
 And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth came  
 Grave Gentry of estate and name,  
 And Captains known for worth in arms  
 And prayed the Earls in self-defence  
 To rise, and prove their innocence. —  
 “ Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might 40  
 For holy Church, and the People’s right ! ”

The Norton fixed, at this demand,  
 His eye upon Northumberland,  
 And said; “ The Minds of Men will own  
 No loyal rest while England’s Crown  
 Remains without an Heir, the bait  
 Of strife and factions desperate;  
 Who, paying deadly hate in kind  
 Through all things else, in this can find 50  
 A mutual hope, a common mind;

And plot, and pant to overwhelm  
 All ancient honour in the realm.  
 — Brave Earls ! to whose heroic veins  
 Our noblest blood is given in trust,  
 To you a suffering State complains,  
 And ye must raise her from the dust.  
 With wishes of still bolder scope  
 On you we look, with dearest hope;  
 Even for our Altars — for the prize,  
 In Heaven, of life that never dies; 60  
 For the old and holy Church we mourn,  
 And must in joy to her return.  
 Behold ! ” — and from his Son whose stand  
 Was on his right, from that guardian hand  
 He took the Banner, and unfurled  
 The precious folds — “ behold,” said he,  
 “ The ransom of a sinful world;  
 Let this your preservation be;  
 The wounds of hands and feet and side,  
 And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died.  
 — This bring I from an ancient hearth, 71  
 These Records wrought in pledge of love  
 By hands of no ignoble birth,  
 A Maid o’er whom the blessed Dove  
 Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood  
 While she the holy work pursued.”  
 “ Uplift the Standard ! ” was the cry  
 From all the listeners that stood round,  
 “ Plant it, — by this we live or die.”  
 The Norton ceased not for that sound, 80  
 But said; “ The prayer which ye have  
 heard,  
 Much-injured Earls ! by these preferred,  
 Is offered to the Saints, the sigh  
 Of tens of thousands, secretly.”  
 “ Uplift it ! ” cried once more the Band,  
 And then a thoughtful pause ensued:  
 “ Uplift it ! ” said Northumberland —  
 Whereat, from all the multitude  
 Who saw the Banner reared on high  
 In all its dread emblazonry, 90  
 A voice of uttermost joy brake out:  
 The transport was rolled down the river of  
 Were,  
 And Durham, the time-honoured Durham,  
 did hear,  
 And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were  
 stirred by the shout !

Now was the North in arms: — they shine  
 In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,  
 At Percy’s voice: and Neville sees  
 His Followers gathering in from Tees,  
 From Were, and all the little rills  
 Concealed among the forked hills — 100  
 Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all

Of Neville, at their Master’s call  
 Had sate together in Raby Hall !  
 Such strength that Earldom held of yore;  
 Nor wanted at this time rich store  
 Of well-appointed chivalry.

— Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,  
 And greet the old paternal shield,  
 They heard the summons; — and, further-  
 more,

Horsemen and Foot of each degree, 110  
 Unbound by pledge of fealty,  
 Appeared, with free and open hate  
 Of novelties in Church and State;  
 Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;  
 And Romish priest, in priest’s attire.  
 And thus, in arms, a zealous Band  
 Proceeding under joint command,  
 To Durham first their course they bear;  
 And in Saint Cuthbert’s ancient seat  
 Sang mass, — and tore the book of prayer, —  
 And trod the bible beneath their feet. 121

Thence marching southward smooth and  
 free

“ They mustered their host at Wetherby,  
 Full sixteen thousand fair to see,”  
 The Choicest Warriors of the North !  
 But none for beauty and for worth  
 Like those eight Sons — who, in a ring,  
 (Ripe men, or blooming in life’s spring)  
 Each with a lance, erect and tall,  
 A falchion, and a buckler small, 130  
 Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,  
 To guard the Standard which he bore.  
 On foot they girt their Father round;  
 And so will keep the appointed ground  
 Where’er their march: no steed will he  
 Henceforth bestride; — triumphantly,  
 He stands upon the grassy sod,  
 Trusting himself to the earth, and God.  
 Rare sight to embolden and inspire !  
 Proud was the field of Sons and Sire; 140  
 Of him the most; and, sooth to say,  
 No shape of man in all the array  
 So graced the sunshine of that day.  
 The monumental pomp of age  
 Was with this goodly Personage;  
 A stature undepressed in size,  
 Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,  
 In open victory o’er the weight  
 Of seventy years, to loftier height;  
 Magnific limbs of withered state; 150  
 A face to fear and venerate;  
 Eyes dark and strong; and on his head  
 Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,  
 Which a brown morion half-concealed,

Light as a hunter's of the field;  
And thus, with girdle round his waist,  
Whereon the Banner-staff might rest  
At need, he stood, advancing high  
The glittering, floating Pageantry.

Who sees him? — thousands see, and One  
With unparticipated gaze; 161  
Who, 'mong those thousands, friend hath  
none,

And treads in solitary ways.  
He, following wheresoe'er he might,  
Hath watched the Banner from afar,  
As shepherds watch a lonely star,  
Or mariners the distant light  
That guides them through a stormy night.  
And now, upon a chosen plot  
Of rising ground, yon heathy spot ! 170  
He takes alone his far-off stand,  
With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.  
Bold is his aspect; but his eye  
Is pregnant with anxiety,  
While, like a tutelary Power,  
He there stands fixed from hour to hour:  
Yet sometimes in more humble guise,  
Upon the turf-clad height he lies  
Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask  
In sunshine were his only task, 180  
Or by his mantle's help to find  
A shelter from the nipping wind:  
And thus, with short oblivion blest,  
His weary spirits gather rest.  
Again he lifts his eyes; and lo !  
The pageant glancing to and fro;  
And hope is awakened by the sight,  
He thence may learn, ere fall of night,  
Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent; 190  
But what avails the bold intent ?

A Royal army is gone forth  
To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH;  
They march with Dudley at their head,  
And, in seven days' space, will to York be  
led ! —

Can such a mighty Host be raised  
Thus suddenly, and brought so near ?  
The Earls upon each other gazed,  
And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear;  
For, with a high and valiant name, 200  
He bore a heart of timid frame;  
And bold if both had been, yet they  
"Against so many may not stay."  
Back therefore will they hie to seize  
A strong Hold on the banks of Tees;  
There wait a favourable hour,  
Until Lord Dacre with his power

From Naworth come; and Howard's aid  
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to  
man, 210

A rumour of this purpose ran,  
The Standard trusting to the care  
Of him who heretofore did bear  
That charge, impatient Norton sought  
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,  
And thus abruptly spake; — " We yield  
(And can it be ?) an unfought field ! —  
How oft has strength, the strength of  
heaven,

To few triumphantly been given !  
Still do our very children boast 220  
Of mitred Thurston — what a Host  
He conquered ! — Saw we not the Plain  
(And flying shall behold again)

Where faith was proved ? — while to battle  
moved

The Standard, on the Sacred Wain  
That bore it, compassed round by a bold  
Fraternity of Barons old;  
And with those grey-haired champions  
stood,

Under the saintly ensigns three,  
The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood — 230  
All confident of victory ! —  
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name ?  
Must Westmoreland be asked with shame  
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,  
In that other day of Neville's Cross ?  
When the Prior of Durham with holy hand  
Raised, as the Vision gave command,  
Saint Cuthbert's Relic — far and near  
Kenned on the point of a lofty spear;  
While the Monks prayed in Maiden's  
Bower 240

To God descending in his power.  
Less would not at our need be due  
To us, who war against the Untrue; —  
The delegates of Heaven we rise,  
Convoked the impious to chastise:  
We, we, the sanctities of old  
Would re-establish and uphold:  
Be warned" — His zeal the Chiefs con-  
founded,

But word was given, and the trumpet  
sounded:

Back through the melancholy Host 250  
Went Norton, and resumed his post.  
Alas ! thought he, and have I borne  
This Banner raised with joyful pride,  
This hope of all posterity,  
By those dread symbols sanctified;

Thus to become at once the scorn  
 Of babbling winds as they go by,  
 A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,  
 To the light clouds of mockery !  
 — " Even these poor eight of mine would  
       stem — " 260  
 Half to himself, and half to them  
 He spake — " would stem, or quell, a force  
 Ten times their number, man and horse:  
 This by their own unaided might,  
 Without their father in their sight,  
 Without the Cause for which they fight;  
 A Cause, which on a needful day  
 Would breed us thousands brave as they."  
 — So speaking, he his reverend head  
 Raised towards that Imagery once more:  
 But the familiar prospect shed 271  
 Despondency unfelt before:  
 A shock of intimations vain,  
 Disuay, and superstitious pain,  
 Fell on him, with the sudden thought  
 Of her by whom the work was wrought: —  
 Oh wherefore was her countenance bright  
 With love divine and gentle light ?  
 She would not, could not, disobey,  
 But her Faith leaned another way. 280  
 Ill tears she wept; I saw them fall,  
 I overheard her as she spake  
 Sad words to that mute Animal,  
 The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake;  
 She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,  
 This Cross in tears: by her, and One  
 Unworthier far we are undone —  
 Her recreant Brother — he prevailed  
 Over that tender Spirit — assailed  
 Too oft, alas ! by her whose head 290  
 In the cold grave hath long been laid:  
 She first, in reason's dawn beguiled  
 Her docile, unsuspecting Child:  
 Far back — far back my mind must go  
 To reach the well-spring of this woe !  
 While thus he brooded, music sweet  
 Of border tunes was played to cheer  
 The footsteps of a quick retreat;  
 But Norton lingered in the rear,  
 Stung with sharp thoughts; and ere the  
       last 300  
 From his distracted brain was cast,  
 Before his Father, Francis stood,  
 And spake in firm and earnest mood.  
 " Though here I bend a suppliant knee  
 In reverence, and unarmed, I bear  
 In your indignant thoughts my share;  
 Am grieved this backward march to see  
 So careless and disorderly.

I scorn your Chiefs — men who would lead,  
 And yet want courage at their need: 310  
 Then look at them with open eyes !  
 Deserve they further sacrifice ? —  
 If — when they shrink, nor dare oppose  
 In open field their gathering foes,  
 (And fast, from this decisive day,  
 Yon multitude must melt away;)   
 If now I ask a grace not claimed  
 While ground was left for hope; unblamed  
 Be an endeavour that can do  
 No injury to them or you. 320  
 My Father ! I would help to find  
 A place of shelter, till the rage  
 Of cruel men do like the wind  
 Exhaust itself and sink to rest;  
 Be Brother now to Brother joined !  
 Admit me in the equipage  
 Of your misfortunes, that at least,  
 Whatever fate remain behind,  
 I may bear witness in my breast  
 To your nobility of mind ! " 330  
 " Thou Enemy, my bane and blight !  
 Oh ! bold to fight the Coward's fight  
 Against all good " — but why declare,  
 At length, the issue of a prayer  
 Which love had prompted, yielding scope  
 Too free to one bright moment's hope ?  
 Suffice it that the Son, who strove  
 With fruitless effort to allay  
 That passion, prudently gave way;  
 Nor did he turn aside to prove 340  
 His Brothers' wisdom or their love —  
 But calmly from the spot withdrew;  
 His best endeavours to renew,  
 Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

## CANTO FOURTH

'T is night: in silence looking down,  
 The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees  
 A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,  
 And Castle, like a stately crown  
 On the steep rocks of winding Tees; —  
 And southward far, with moor between,  
 Hill-top, and flood, and forest green,  
 The bright Moon sees that valley small  
 Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall  
 A venerable image yields 10  
 Of quiet to the neighbouring fields;  
 While from one pillared chimney breathes  
 The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths.  
 — The courts are hushed; — for timely  
       sleep  
 The greyhounds to their kennel creep;



The peacock in the broad ash tree  
 Aloft is roosted for the night,  
 He who in proud prosperity  
 Of colours manifold and bright  
 Walked round, affronting the daylight; 20  
 And higher still, above the bower  
 Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower  
 The hall-clock in the clear moonshine  
 With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah! who could think that sadness here  
 Hath any sway? or pain, or fear?  
 A soft and lulling sound is heard  
 Of streams inaudible by day;  
 The garden pool's dark surface, stirred  
 By the night insects in their play, 30  
 Breaks into dimples small and bright;  
 A thousand, thousand rings of light  
 That shape themselves and disappear  
 Almost as soon as seen: — and lo!  
 Not distant far, the milk-white Doe —  
 The same who quietly was feeding  
 On the green herb, and nothing heeding,  
 When Francis, uttering to the Maid  
 His last words in the yew-tree shade,  
 Involved whate'er by love was brought 40  
 Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,  
 Or chance presented to his eye,  
 In one sad sweep of destiny —  
 The same fair Creature, who hath found  
 Her way into forbidden ground;  
 Where now — within this spacious plot  
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,  
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades  
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,  
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall 50  
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,  
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,  
 And terraces in trim array —  
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,  
 With pine and cedar spreading wide  
 Their darksome boughs on either side,  
 In open moonlight doth she lie;  
 Happy as others of her kind,  
 That, far from human neighbourhood,  
 Range unrestricted as the wind, 60  
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid  
 Emerging from a cedar shade  
 To open moonshine, where the Doe  
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid;  
 Like a patch of April snow —  
 Upon a bed of herbage green,  
 Lingering in a woody glade  
 Or behind a rocky screen —  
 Lonely relic! which, if seen 70

By the shepherd, is passed by  
 With an inattentive eye.  
 Nor more regard doth She bestow  
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe  
 Now couched at ease, though oft this day  
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,  
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,  
 Approaching in her gentle way,  
 To win some look of love, or gain  
 Encouragement to sport or play — 80  
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid  
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed; — the breeze  
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.  
 As she approached yon rustic Shed  
 Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread  
 Along the walls and overhead,  
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers  
 Revived a memory of those hours  
 When here, in this remote alcove, 90  
 (While from the pendent woodbine came  
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)  
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove  
 To teach her salutary fears  
 And mysteries above her years.  
 Yes, she is soothed: an Image faint,  
 And yet not faint — a presence bright  
 Returns to her — that blessed Saint  
 Who with mild looks and language mild  
 Instructed here her darling Child, 100  
 While yet a prattler on the knee,  
 To worship in simplicity  
 The invisible God, and take for guide  
 The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown — the Vision, and the sense  
 Of that beguiling influence,  
 "But oh! thou Angel from above,  
 Mute Spirit of maternal love,  
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear  
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear 110  
 Sent upon embassies of fear;  
 As thou thy presence hast to me  
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry  
 Descend on Francis; nor forbear  
 To greet him with a voice, and say; —  
 'If hope be a rejected stay,  
 'Do thou, my christian Son, beware  
 'Of that most lamentable snare,  
 'The self-reliance of despair!'"

Then from within the embowered retreat  
 Where she had found a grateful seat 121  
 Perturbed she issues. She will go!  
 Herself will follow to the war,  
 And clasp her Father's knees; — ah, no!  
 She meets the insuperable bar,

The injunction by her Brother laid;  
 His parting charge — but ill obeyed —  
 That interdicted all debate,  
 All prayer for this cause or for that;  
 All efforts that would turn aside 130  
 The headstrong current of their fate:  
*Her duty is to stand and wait;*  
 In resignation to abide  
 The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE  
 O'ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE.  
 — She feels it, and her pangs are checked.  
 But now, as silently she paced  
 The turf, and thought by thought was  
 chased,  
 Came One who, with sedate respect,  
 Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake;  
 "An old man's privilege I take: 141  
 Dark is the time — a woeful day!  
 Dear daughter of affliction, say  
 How can I serve you? point the way."  
 "Rights have you, and may well be  
 bold;  
 You with my Father have grown old  
 In friendship — strive — for his sake go —  
 Turn from us all the coming woe:  
 This would I beg; but on my mind  
 A passive stillness is enjoined. 150  
 On you, if room for mortal aid  
 Be left, is no restriction laid;  
 You not forbidden to recline  
 With hope upon the Will divine."  
 "Hope," said the old Man, "must abide  
 With all of us, whate'er betide.  
 In Craven's Wilds is many a den,  
 To shelter persecuted men:  
 Far under ground is many a cave,  
 Where they might lie as in the grave, 160  
 Until this storm hath ceased to rave:  
 Or let them cross the River Tweed,  
 And be at once from peril freed!"  
 "Ah tempt me not!" she faintly sighed;  
 "I will not counsel nor exhort,  
 With my condition satisfied;  
 But you, at least, may make report  
 Of what befalls; — be this your task —  
 This may be done; — 't is all I ask!"  
 She spake — and from the Lady's sight  
 The Sire, unconscious of his age, 171  
 Departed promptly as a Page  
 Bound on some errand of delight.  
 — The noble Francis — wise as brave,  
 Thought he, may want not skill to save.  
 With hopes in tenderness concealed,  
 Unarmed he followed to the field;  
 Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers

Are now besieging Barnard's Towers, —  
 "Grant that the Moon which shines this  
 night 180  
 May guide them in a prudent flight!"  
 But quick the turns of chance and change,  
 And knowledge has a narrow range;  
 Whence idle fears, and needless pain,  
 And wishes blind, and efforts vain. —  
 The Moon may shine, but cannot be  
 Their guide in flight — already she  
 Hath witnessed their captivity.  
 She saw the desperate assault  
 Upon that hostile castle made; — 190  
 But dark and dismal is the vault  
 Where Norton and his sons are laid!  
 Disastrous issue! — he had said  
 "This night yon faithless Towers must  
 yield,  
 Or we for ever quit the field.  
 — Neville is utterly dismayed,  
 For promise fails of Howard's aid;  
 And Daere to our call replies  
 That *he* is unprepared to rise.  
 My heart is sick; — this weary pause 200  
 Must needs be fatal to our cause.  
 The breach is open — on the wall,  
 This night, the Banner shall be planted!"  
 — "T was done: his Sons were with him —  
 all;  
 They belt him round with hearts undaunted  
 And others follow; — Sire and Son  
 Leap down into the court; — "T is won" —  
 They shout aloud — but Heaven decreed  
 That with their joyful shout should close  
 The triumph of a desperate deed 210  
 Which struck with terror friends and foes!  
 The friend shrinks back — the foe recoils  
 From Norton and his filial band;  
 But they, now caught within the toils,  
 Against a thousand cannot stand; —  
 The foe from numbers courage drew,  
 And overpowered that gallant few.  
 "A rescue for the Standard!" cried  
 The Father from within the walls;  
 But, see, the sacred Standard falls! — 220  
 Confusion through the Camp spread wide:  
 Some fled; and some their fears detained:  
 But ere the Moon had sunk to rest  
 In her pale chambers of the west,  
 Of that rash levy nought remained.

## CANTO FIFTH

HIGH on a point of rugged ground  
 Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell

Above the loftiest ridge or mound  
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single — Norton Tower its name —  
It fronts all quarters, and looks round  
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,  
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,  
Upon a prospect without bound. 10

The summit of this bold ascent —  
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free  
As Pendle-hill or Pennygent  
From wind, or frost, or vapours wet —  
Had often heard the sound of glee  
When there the youthful Nortons met,  
To practise games and archery:  
How proud and happy they! the crowd  
Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud!  
And from the scorching noon-tide sun, 20  
From showers, or when the prize was won,  
They to the Tower withdrew, and there  
Would mirth run round, with generous  
fare;

And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall  
Was happiest, proudest, of them all!

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,  
Upon the height walks to and fro;  
'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,  
Received the bitterness of woe:  
For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,  
Such rights did feeble nature claim; 31  
And oft her steps had hither steered,  
Though not unconscious of self-blame;  
For she her brother's charge revered,  
His farewell words; and by the same,  
Yea by her brother's very name,  
Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood  
That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,  
Who with her Father had grown old 40  
In friendship; rival hunters they,  
And fellow warriors in their day;  
To Rylstone he the tidings brought;  
Then on this height the Maid had sought,  
And, gently as he could, had told  
The end of that dire Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned; "You said  
That Francis lives, *he* is not dead?"  
"Your noble brother hath been spared; 50  
To take his life they have not dared;  
On him and on his high endeavour  
The light of praise shall shine for ever!  
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain  
His solitary course maintain;  
Not vainly struggled in the might

Of duty, seeing with clear sight;  
He was their comfort to the last,  
Their joy till every pang was past.

I witnessed when to York they came —  
What, Lady, if their feet were tied; 61  
They might deserve a good Man's blame;  
But marks of infamy and shame —  
These were their triumph, these their pride,  
Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd  
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,  
'Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried,  
'A Prisoner once, but now set free!  
'Tis well, for he the worst defied  
Through force of natural piety; 70  
He rose not in this quarrel; he,  
For concord's sake and England's good,  
Suit to his Brothers often made  
With tears, and of his Father prayed —  
And when he had in vain withstood  
Their purpose — then did he divide,  
He parted from them; but at their side  
Now walks in unanimity.

Then peace to cruelty and scorn,  
While to the prison they are borne, 80  
Peace, peace to all indignity!

And so in Prison were they laid —  
Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid,  
For I am come with power to bless,  
By scattering gleams, through your dis-  
tress,

Of a redeeming happiness.  
Me did a reverent pity move  
And privilege of ancient love;  
And, in your service, making bold,  
Entrance I gained to that stronghold. 90

Your Father gave me cordial greeting;  
But to his purposes, that burned  
Within him, instantly returned:  
He was commanding and entreating,  
And said — 'We need not stop, my Son!  
Thoughts press, and time is hurrying  
on' —

And so to Francis he renewed  
His words, more calmly thus pursued.

'Might this our enterprise have sped,  
Change wide and deep the Land had seen, 100  
A renovation from the dead,  
A spring-tide of immortal green:  
The darksome altars would have blazed  
Like stars when clouds are rolled away;  
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,  
Once more the Rood had been upraised  
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.  
Then, then — had I survived to see  
New life in Bolton Priory;

The voice restored, the eye of Truth  
 Re-opened that inspired my youth;  
 To see her in her pomp arrayed —  
 This Banner (for such vow I made)  
 Should on the consecrated breast  
 Of that same Temple have found rest:  
 I would myself have hung it high,  
 Fit offering of glad victory !

A shadow of such thought remains  
 To cheer this sad and pensive time;  
 A solemn fancy yet sustains  
 One feeble Being — bids me climb  
 Even to the last — one effort more  
 To attest my Faith, if not restore.

Hear then,' said he, 'while I impart,  
 My Son, the last wish of my heart.  
 The Banner strive thou to regain;  
 And, if the endeavour prove not vain,  
 Bear it — to whom if not to thee  
 Shall I this lonely thought consign ? —  
 Bear it to Bolton Priory,  
 And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine;  
 To wither in the sun and breeze  
 'Mid those decaying sanctities.  
 There let at least the gift be laid,  
 The testimony there displayed;  
 Bold proof that with no selfish aim,  
 But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,  
 I helmeted a brow though white,  
 And took a place in all men's sight;  
 Yea offered up this noble Brood,  
 This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,  
 And turned away from thee, my Son !  
 And left — but be the rest unsaid,  
 The name untouched, the tear unshed; —  
 My wish is known, and I have done:  
 Now promise, grant this one request,  
 'This dying prayer, and be thou blest !'

Then Francis answered — 'Trust thy  
 Son,

For, with God's will, it shall be done !' —  
 The pledge obtained, the solemn word  
 Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,  
 And Officers appeared in state  
 To lead the prisoners to their fate.  
 They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear  
 To tell, or, Lady, you to hear ?  
 They rose — embraces none were given —  
 They stood like trees when earth and  
 heaven

Are calm; they knew each other's worth,  
 And reverently the Band went forth.  
 They met, when they had reached the door,  
 One with profane and harsh intent  
 Placed there — that he might go before

And, with that rueful Banner borne  
 Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,  
 Conduct them to their punishment:  
 So cruel Sussex, unrestrained  
 By human feeling, had ordained.  
 The unhappy Banner Francis saw,  
 And, with a look of calm command  
 Inspiring universal awe,  
 He took it from the soldier's hand;  
 And all the people that stood round  
 Confirmed the deed in peace profound.  
 — High transport did the Father shed  
 Upon his Son — and they were led,  
 Led on, and yielded up their breath;  
 Together died, a happy death ! —  
 But Francis, soon as he had braved  
 That insult, and the Banner saved,  
 Athwart the unresisting tide  
 Of the spectators occupied  
 In admiration or dismay,  
 Bore instantly his Charge away."

These things, which thus had in the sight  
 And hearing passed of Him who stood  
 With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,  
 In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,  
 He told; and oftentimes with voice  
 Of power to comfort or rejoice;  
 For deepest sorrows that aspire,  
 Go high, no transport ever higher.  
 "Yes — God is rich in mercy," said  
 The old Man to the silent Maid,  
 "Yet, Lady ! shines, through this black  
 night,

One star of aspect heavenly bright;  
 Your Brother lives — he lives — is come  
 Perhaps already to his home;  
 Then let us leave this dreary place."  
 She yielded, and with gentle pace,  
 Though without one uplifted look,  
 To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

## CANTO SIXTH

WHY comes not Francis ? — From the dole-  
 ful City  
 He fled, — and, in his flight, could hear  
 The death-sounds of the Minster-bell:  
 That sullen stroke pronounced farewell  
 To Marmaduke, cut off from pity !  
 To Ambrose that ! and then a knell  
 For him, the sweet half-open Flower !  
 For all — all dying in one hour !  
 — Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts of  
 love  
 Should bear him to his Sister dear

With the fleet motion of a dove;  
 Yea, like a heavenly messenger  
 Of speediest wing, should he appear.  
 Why comes he not? — for westward fast  
 Along the plain of York he past;  
 Reckless of what impels or leads,  
 Unchecked he hurries on; — nor heeds  
 The sorrow, through the Villages,  
 Spread by triumphant cruelties  
 Of vengeful military force,  
 And punishment without remorse. 20  
 He marked not, heard not, as he fled,  
 All but the suffering heart was dead  
 For him abandoned to blank awe,  
 To vacancy, and horror strong:  
 And the first object which he saw,  
 With conscious sight, as he swept along —  
 It was the Banner in his hand!  
 He felt — and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed: 30  
 What hath he done? what promise made?  
 Oh weak, weak moment! to what end  
 Can such a vain oblation tend,  
 And he the Bearer? — Can he go  
 Carrying this instrument of woe,  
 And find, find anywhere, a right  
 To excuse him in his Country's sight?  
 No; will not all men deem the change  
 A downward course, perverse and strange?  
 Here is it; — but how? when? must she, 40  
 The unoffending Emily,  
 Again this piteous object see?

Such conflict long did he maintain,  
 Nor liberty nor rest could gain:  
 His own life into danger brought  
 By this sad burden — even that thought,  
 Exciting self-suspicion strong  
 Swayed the brave man to his wrong.  
 And how — unless it were the sense  
 Of all-disposing Providence, 50  
 Its will unquestionably shown —  
 How has the Banner clung so fast  
 To a palsied, and unconscious hand;  
 Clung to the hand to which it passed  
 Without impediment? And why,  
 But that Heaven's purpose might be known,  
 Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,  
 No intervention, to withstand  
 Fulfilment of a Father's prayer  
 Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest 60  
 When all resentments were at rest,  
 And life in death laid the heart bare? —  
 Then, like a spectre sweeping by,  
 Rushed through his mind the prophecy  
 Of utter desolation made

To Emily in the yew-tree shade:  
 He sighed, submitting will and power  
 To the stern embrace of that grasping hour.  
 "No choice is left, the deed is mine —  
 Dead are they, dead! — and I will go, 70  
 And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,  
 Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will  
 He went, and traversed plain and hill;  
 And up the vale of Wharf his way  
 Pursued; — and, at the dawn of day,  
 Attained a summit whence his eyes  
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.  
 There Francis for a moment's space  
 Made halt — but hark! a noise behind 80  
 Of horsemen at an eager pace!  
 He heard, and with misgiving mind.  
 — 'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the  
 Band:

They come, by cruel Sussex sent;  
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand  
 Of death had drunk their punishment,  
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed,  
 How Francis, with the Banner claimed  
 As his own charge, had disappeared,  
 By all the standers-by revered. 90  
 His whole bold carriage (which had quelled  
 Thus far the Opposer, and repelled  
 All censure, enterprise so bright  
 That even bad men had vainly striven  
 Against that overcoming light)  
 Was then reviewed, and prompt word given  
 That to what place soever fled  
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the height  
 Where Francis stood in open sight. 100  
 They hem him round — "Behold the proof,"  
 They cried, "the Ensign in his hand!  
*He* did not arm, he walked aloof!  
 For why? — to save his Father's land; —  
 Worst Traitor of them all is he,  
 A Traitor dark and cowardly!"

"I am no Traitor," Francis said,  
 "Though this unhappy freight I bear;  
 And must not part with. But beware; —  
 Err not by hasty zeal misled, 110  
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,  
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"  
 At this he from the beaten road  
 Retreated towards a brake of thorn,  
 That like a place of vantage showed;  
 And there stood bravely, though forlorn.  
 In self-defence with warlike brow  
 He stood, — nor weaponless was now;  
 He from a Soldier's hand had snatched

A spear, — and, so protected, watched 120  
 The Assailants, turning round and round;  
 But from behind with treacherous wound  
 A Spearman brought him to the ground.  
 The guardian lance, as Francis fell,  
 Dropped from him; but his other hand  
 The Banner clenched; till, from out the  
 Band,

One, the most eager for the prize,  
 Rushed in; and — while, O grief to tell!  
 A glimmering sense still left, with eyes  
 Unclosed the noble Francis lay — 130  
 Seized it, as hunters seize their prey;  
 But not before the warm life-blood  
 Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,  
 The wounds the broidered Banner showed,  
 Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as good!

Proudly the Horsemen bore away  
 The Standard; and where Francis lay  
 There was he left alone, unwept,  
 And for two days unnoticed slept.  
 For at that time bewildering fear 140  
 Possessed the country, far and near;  
 But, on the third day, passing by  
 One of the Norton Tenantry  
 Espied the uncovered Corse; the Man  
 Shrunk as he recognised the face,  
 And to the nearest homesteads ran  
 And called the people to the place.  
 — How desolate is Rylstone-hall!  
 This was the instant thought of all;  
 And if the lonely Lady there 150  
 Should be; to her they cannot bear  
 This weight of anguish and despair.  
 So, when upon sad thoughts had prest  
 Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it best  
 That, if the Priest should yield assent  
 And no one hinder their intent,  
 Then, they, for Christian pity's sake,  
 In holy ground a grave would make;  
 And straightway buried he should be  
 In the Churchyard of the Priory. 160

Apart, some little space, was made  
 The grave where Francis must be laid.  
 In no confusion or neglect  
 This did they, — but in pure respect  
 That he was born of gentle blood;  
 And that there was no neighbourhood  
 Of kindred for him in that ground:  
 So to the Churchyard they are bound,  
 Bearing the body on a bier;  
 And psalms they sing — a holy sound 170  
 That hill and vale with sadness hear.

But Emily hath raised her head,  
 And is again quieted;

She must behold! — so many gone,  
 Where is the solitary One?  
 And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped she, —  
 To seek her Brother forth she went,  
 And tremblingly her course she bent  
 Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.  
 She comes, and in the vale hath heard 180  
 The funeral dirge; — she sees the knot  
 Of people, sees them in one spot —  
 And darting like a wounded bird  
 She reached the grave, and with her breast  
 Upon the ground received the rest, —  
 The consummation, the whole ruth  
 And sorrow of this final truth!

## CANTO SEVENTH

"Powers there are  
 That touch each other to the quick — in modes  
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,  
 No soul to dream of."

THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand  
 Was to the harp a strong command,  
 Called the submissive strings to wake  
 In glory for this Maiden's sake,  
 Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled  
 To hide her poor afflicted head?  
 What mighty forest in its gloom  
 Enfolds her? — is a rifted tomb  
 Within the wilderness her seat?  
 Some island which the wild waves beat — 10  
 Is that the Sufferer's last retreat?  
 Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds  
 Its perilous front in mists and clouds?  
 High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,  
 Sea, desert, what do these avail?  
 Oh take her anguish and her fears  
 Into a deep recess of years!  
 'Tis done; — despoil and desolation  
 O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;  
 Pools, terraces, and walks are sown 20  
 With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,  
 Or have given way to slow mutation,  
 While, in their ancient habitation  
 The Norton name hath been unknown.  
 The lordly Mansion of its pride  
 Is stripped; the ravage hath spread wide  
 Through park and field, a perishing  
 That mocks the gladness of the Spring!  
 And, with this silent gloom agreeing,  
 Appears a joyless human Being, 30  
 Of aspect such as if the waste  
 Were under her dominion placed.  
 Upon a primrose bank, her throne  
 Of quietness, she sits alone;

Among the ruins of a wood,  
 Erewhile a covert bright and green,  
 And where full many a brave tree stood,  
 That used to spread its boughs, and ring  
 With the sweet bird's carolling.  
 Behold her, like a virgin Queen, 40  
 Neglecting in imperial state,  
 These outward images of fate,  
 And carrying inward a serene  
 And perfect sway, through many a thought  
 Of chance and change, that hath been  
 brought

To the subjection of a holy,  
 Though stern and rigorous, melancholy !  
 The like authority, with grace  
 Of awfulness, is in her face, —  
 There hath she fixed it; yet it seems 50  
 To o'ershadow by no native right  
 That face, which cannot lose the gleams,  
 Lose utterly the tender gleams,  
 Of gentleness and meek delight,  
 And loving-kindness ever bright:  
 Such is her sovereign mien: — her dress  
 (A vest with woollen cincture tied,  
 A hood of mountain-wool undyed)  
 Is homely, — fashioned to express  
 A wandering Pilgrim's humbleness. 60

And she *hath* wandered, long and far,  
 Beneath the light of sun and star;  
 Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,  
 Driven forward like a withered leaf,  
 Yea like a ship at random blown  
 To distant places and unknown.  
 But now she dares to seek a haven  
 Among her native wilds of Craven;  
 Hath seen again her Father's roof,  
 And put her fortitude to proof; 70  
 The mighty sorrow hath been borne,  
 And she is thoroughly forlorn:  
 Her soul doth in itself stand fast,  
 Sustained by memory of the past  
 And strength of Reason; held above  
 The infirmities of mortal love;  
 Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,  
 And awfully impenetrable.

And so — beneath a mouldered tree,  
 A self-surviving leafless oak 80  
 By unregarded age from stroke  
 Of ravage saved — sate Emily.  
 There did she rest, with head reclined,  
 Herself most like a stately flower,  
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of birth  
 Hath separated from its kind,  
 To live and die in a shady bower,  
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,  
 A troop of deer came sweeping by; 90  
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder !  
 For One, among those rushing deer,  
 A single One, in mid career  
 Hath stopped, and fixed her large full  
 eye

Upon the Lady Emily;  
 A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,  
 A radiant creature, silver-bright !  
 Thus checked, a little while it stayed;  
 A little thoughtful pause it made;  
 And then advanced with stealth-like pace,  
 Drew softly near her, and more near — 101  
 Looked round — but saw no cause for  
 fear;

So to her feet the Creature came,  
 And laid its head upon her knee,  
 And looked into the Lady's face,  
 A look of pure benignity,  
 And fond unclouded memory.  
 It is, thought Emily, the same,  
 The very Doe of other years ! —  
 The pleading look the Lady viewed, 110  
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,  
 She melted into tears —

A flood of tears, that flowed apace,  
 Upon the happy Creature's face.  
 Oh, moment ever blest ! O Pair  
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,  
 This was for you a precious greeting;  
 And may it prove a fruitful meeting !  
 Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe  
 Can she depart ? can she forego 120  
 The Lady, once her playful peer,  
 And now her sainted Mistress dear ?  
 And will not Emily receive

This lovely chronicler of things  
 Long past, delights and sorrowings ?  
 Lone Sufferer ! will not she believe  
 The promise in that speaking face;  
 And welcome, as a gift of grace,  
 The saddest thought the Creature brings ?

That day, the first of a re-union 130  
 Which was to teem with high communion,  
 That day of balmy April weather,  
 They tarried in the wood together.  
 And when, ere fall of evening dew,  
 She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,  
 The White Doe tracked with faithful pace  
 The Lady to her dwelling-place;  
 That nook where, on paternal ground,  
 A habitation she had found,  
 The Master of whose humble board 140  
 Once owned her Father for his Lord;

A hut, by tufted trees defended,  
Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is  
blended.

When Emily by morning light  
Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.  
She shrunk: — with one frail shock of pain  
Received and followed by a prayer,  
She saw the Creature once again;  
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear; —  
But, wheresoever she looked round, 150  
All now was trouble-haunted ground;  
And therefore now she deems it good  
Once more this restless neighbourhood  
To leave. — Unwooded, yet unforbidden,  
The White Doe followed up the vale,  
Up to another cottage, hidden  
In the deep fork of Amerdale;  
And there may Emily restore  
Herself, in spots unseen before.  
— Why tell of mossy rock, or tree, 160  
By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,  
Haunts of a strengthening amity  
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified?  
For she hath ventured now to read  
Of time, and place, and thought, and  
deed —

Endless history that lies  
In her silent Follower's eyes;  
Who with a power like human reason  
Discerns the favourable season,  
Skilled to approach or to retire, — 170  
From looks conceiving her desire;  
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,  
That vary to the heart within.  
If she too passionately wreathed  
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,  
Walked quick or slowly, every mood  
In its degree was understood;  
Then well may their accord be true,  
And kindest intercourse ensue.  
— Oh! surely 't was a gentle rousing 180  
When she by sudden glimpse espied  
The White Doe on the mountain browsing,  
Or in the meadow wandered wide!  
How pleased, when down the Straggler sank  
Beside her, on some sunny bank!  
How soothed, when in thick bower enclosed,  
They, like a nested pair, reposed!  
Fair Vision! when it crossed the Maid  
Within some rocky cavern laid,  
The dark cave's portal gliding by, 190  
White as whitest cloud on high  
Floating through the azure sky.  
— What now is left for pain or fear?  
That Presence, dearer and more dear,

While they, side by side, were straying,  
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,  
Did now a very gladness yield  
At morning to the dewy field,  
And with a deeper peace endured  
The hour of moonlight solitude. 200

With her Companion, in such frame  
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came;  
And, ranging through the wasted groves,  
Received the memory of old loves,  
Undisturbed and undistrest,  
Into a soul which now was blest  
With a soft spring-day of holy,  
Mild, and grateful, melancholy:  
Not sunless gloom or unlightened,  
But by tender fancies brightened. 210

When the bells of Rylstone played  
Their sabbath music — “*God us apde!*”  
That was the sound they seemed to speak;  
Inscriptive legend which I ween  
May on those holy bells be seen,  
That legend and her Grandsire's name;  
And oftentimes the Lady meek  
Had in her childhood read the same;  
Words which she slighted at that day;  
But now, when such sad change was  
wrought, 220

And of that lonely name she thought —  
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,  
While she sate listening in the shade,  
With vocal music, “*God us apde;*”  
And all the hills were glad to bear  
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power;  
But with the White Doe at her side  
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,  
And thence look round her far and wide, 230  
Her fate there measuring; — all is stilled, —  
The weak One hath subdued her heart;  
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,  
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part!  
But here her Brother's words have failed;  
Here hath a milder doom prevailed;  
That she, of him and all bereft,  
Hath yet this faithful Partner left;  
This one Associate, that disproves  
His words, remains for her, and loves. 240  
If tears are shed, they do not fall  
For loss of him — for one, or all;  
Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep  
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep;  
A few tears down her cheek descend  
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,  
And bless for both this savage spot;



Which Emily doth sacred hold  
 For reasons dear and manifold — 250  
 Here hath she, here before her sight,  
 Close to the summit of this height,  
 The grassy rock-encircled Pound  
 In which the Creature first was found.  
 So beautiful the timid Thrall  
 (A spotless Youngling white as foam)  
 Her youngest Brother brought it home;  
 The youngest, then a lusty boy,  
 Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall  
 With heart brimful of pride and joy ! 260  
 But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,  
 On favouring nights, she loved to go;  
 There ranged through cloister, court, and  
 aisle,  
 Attended by the soft-paced Doe;  
 Nor feared she in the still moonshine  
 To look upon Saint Mary's shrine;  
 Nor on the lonely turf that showed  
 Where Francis slept in his last abode.  
 For that she came; there oft she sate  
 Forlorn, but not disconsolate: 270  
 And, when she from the abyss returned  
 Of thought, she neither shrunk nor  
 mourned;  
 Was happy that she lived to greet  
 Her mute Companion as it lay  
 In love and pity at her feet;  
 How happy in its turn to meet  
 The recognition ! the mild glance  
 Beamed from that gracious countenance;  
 Communication, like the ray  
 Of a new morning, to the nature 280  
 And prospects of the inferior Creature !  
 A mortal Song we sing, by dower  
 Encouraged of celestial power;  
 Power which the viewless Spirit shed  
 By whom we were first visited;  
 Whose voice we heard, whose hand and  
 wings  
 Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,  
 When, left in solitude, erewhile  
 We stood before this ruined Pile,  
 And, quitting unsubstantial dreams, 290  
 Sang in this Presence kindred themes;  
 Distress and desolation spread  
 Through human hearts, and pleasure  
 dead, —  
 Dead — but to live again on earth,  
 A second and yet nobler birth;  
 Dire overthrow, and yet how high  
 The re-ascent in sanctity !  
 From fair to fairer; day by day  
 A more divine and loftier way !

Even such this blessed Pilgrim trod, 300  
 By sorrow lifted towards her God;  
 Uplifted to the purest sky  
 Of undisturbed mortality.  
 Her own thoughts loved she; and could  
 bend  
 A dear look to her lowly Friend;  
 There stopped; her thirst was satisfied  
 With what this innocent spring supplied:  
 Her sanction inwardly she bore,  
 And stood apart from human cares:  
 But to the world returned no more, 310  
 Although with no unwilling mind  
 Help did she give at need, and joined  
 The Wharfedale peasants in their prayers.  
 At length, thus faintly, faintly tied  
 To earth, she was set free, and died.  
 Thy soul, exalted Emily,  
 Maid of the blasted family,  
 Rose to the God from whom it came !  
 — In Rylstone Church her mortal frame  
 Was buried by her Mother's side. 320  
 Most glorious sunset ! and a ray  
 Survives — the twilight of this day —  
 In that fair Creature whom the fields  
 Support, and whom the forest shields;  
 Who, having filled a holy place,  
 Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace;  
 And bears a memory and a mind  
 Raised far above the law of kind;  
 Haunting the spots with lonely cheer  
 Which her dear Mistress once held dear:  
 Loves most what Emily loved most — 331  
 The enclosure of this churchyard ground;  
 Here wanders like a gliding ghost,  
 And every sabbath here is found;  
 Comes with the people when the bells  
 Are heard among the moorland dells,  
 Finds entrance through yon arch, where  
 way  
 Lies open on the sabbath-day;  
 Here walks amid the mournful waste  
 Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced, 340  
 And floors encumbered with rich show  
 Of fret-work imagery laid low;  
 Paces softly, or makes halt,  
 By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault;  
 By plate of monumental brass  
 Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,  
 And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave:  
 But chiefly by that single grave,  
 That one sequestered hillock green,  
 The pensive visitant is seen. 350  
 There doth the gentle Creature lie  
 With those adversities unmoved;

Calm spectacle, by earth and sky  
In their benignity approved !  
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,  
Subdued by outrage and decay,

Looks down upon her with a smile,  
A gracious smile, that seems to say —  
"Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,  
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime !" 360

## THE FORCE OF PRAYER

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY

A TRADITION

1807. 1815

An Appendage to the "White Doe." My friend, Mr. Rogers, has also written on the subject. The story is preserved in Dr. Whitaker's *History of Craven* — a topographical writer of first-rate merit in all that concerns the past : but such was his aversion from the modern spirit, as shown in the spread of manufactories in those districts of which he treats, that his readers are left entirely ignorant both of the progress of these arts and their real bearing upon the comfort, virtues, and happiness of the inhabitants. While wandering on foot through the fertile valleys and over the moorlands of the Apennine that divides Yorkshire from Lancashire, I used to be delighted with observing the number of substantial cottages that had sprung up on every side, each having its little plot of fertile ground won from the surrounding waste. A bright and warm fire, if needed, was always to be found in these dwellings. The father was at his loom ; the children looked healthy and happy. Is it not to be feared that the increase of mechanic power has done away with many of these blessings, and substituted many evils ? Alas ! if these evils grow, how are they to be checked, and where is the remedy to be found ? Political economy will not supply it ; that is certain, we must look to something deeper, purer, and higher.

"What is good for a bootless bene ?"  
With these dark words begins my Tale ;  
And their meaning is, whence can comfort  
spring  
When Prayer is of no avail ?

"What is good for a bootless bene ?"  
The Falconer to the Lady said ;  
And she made answer "ENDLESS SORROW !"   
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,  
And from the look of the Falconer's eye ; 10

And from the love which was in her soul  
For her youthful Romilly.

— Young Romilly through Barden woods  
Is ranging high and low ;  
And holds a greyhound in a leash,  
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,  
How tempting to bestride !  
For lordly Wharf is there pent in  
With rocks on either side. 20

This striding-place is called THE STRID,  
A name which it took of yore :  
A thousand years hath it borne that name,  
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,  
And what may now forbid  
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
Shall bound across THE STRID ?

He sprang in glee, — for what cared he  
That the river was strong, and the rocks  
were steep ? — 30  
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,  
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
And strangled by a merciless force ;  
For never more was young Romilly seen  
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,  
And long, unspeaking, sorrow :  
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts  
A name more sad than Yarrow. 40

If for a lover the Lady wept,  
A solace she might borrow  
From death, and from the passion of  
death ; —  
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day  
Which was to be to-morrow :  
Her hope was a further-looking hope,  
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,  
And proudly did its branches wave;  
And the root of this delightful tree  
Was in her husband's grave !

50

Long, long in darkness did she sit,  
And her first words were, "Let there be  
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,  
A stately Priory !"

The stately Priory was reared;  
And Wharf, as he moved along,  
To matins joined a mournful voice,  
Nor failed at evensong.

60

And the Lady prayed in heaviness  
That looked not for relief !  
But slowly did her succour come,  
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart  
That shall lack a timely end,  
If but to God we turn, and ask  
Of Him to be our friend !

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR  
WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A  
TRACT OCCASIONED BY THE  
CONVENTION OF CINTRA

1808. 1815

Nor 'mid the world's vain objects that en-  
slave

The free-born Soul — that World whose  
vaunted skill

In selfish interest perverts the will,  
Whose factions lead astray the wise and  
brave —

Not there; but in dark wood and rocky cave,  
And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill  
With omnipresent murmur as they rave  
Down their steep beds, that never shall be  
still:

Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sub-  
lime

I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering  
Spain;

For her consult the auguries of time,  
And through the human heart explore my  
way;

And look and listen — gathering, whence I  
may,

Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can re-  
strain.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME  
AND ON THE SAME OCCASION.

1808. 1815

I DROPPED my pen; and listened to the  
Wind  
That sang of trees upturn and vessels  
tost —

A midnight harmony; and wholly lost  
To the general sense of men by chains con-  
fined

Of business, care, or pleasure; or resigned  
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impas-  
sioned strain,

Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,  
Like acceptance from the World will find.  
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink  
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows  
past;

And to the attendant promise will give  
heed —

The prophecy, — like that of this wild blast,  
Which, while it makes the heart with sad-  
ness shrink,

Tells also of bright calms that shall suc-  
ceed.

GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN

1808. 1839

WHO weeps for strangers ? Many wept  
For George and Sarah Green;  
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,  
Whose grave may here be seen.

By night, upon these stormy fells,  
Did wife and husband roam;  
Six little ones at home had left,  
And could not find that home.

For any dwelling-place of man  
As vainly did they seek. 10  
He perish'd; and a voice was heard —  
The widow's lonely shriek.

Not many steps, and she was left  
A body without life —  
A few short steps were the chain that bound  
The husband to the wife.

Now do those sternly-featured hills  
Look gently on this grave;  
And quiet now are the depths of air,  
As a sea without a wave. 20

But deeper lies the heart of peace  
In quiet more profound;  
The heart of quietness is here  
Within this churchyard bound.

And from all agony of mind  
It keeps them safe, and far  
From fear and grief, and from all need  
Of sun or guiding star.

O darkness of the grave! how deep,  
After that living night —  
That last and dreary living one  
Of sorrow and affright?

O sacred marriage-bed of death,  
That keeps them side by side  
In bond of peace, in bond of love,  
That may not be untied!

HOFFER

1809. 1815

OF mortal parents is the Hero born  
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led?  
Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead  
Returned to animate an age forlorn?  
He comes like Phebus through the gates  
of morn

When dreary darkness is discomfited,  
Yet mark his modest state! upon his head,  
That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.  
O Liberty! they stagger at the shock  
From van to rear -- and with one mind  
would flee,

But half their host is buried: — rock on rock  
Descends: — beneath this godlike Warrior,  
see!

Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemoek  
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

"ADVANCE — COME FORTH  
FROM THY TYROLEAN GROUND"

1809. 1815

ADVANCE — come forth from thy Tyrolean  
ground,

Dear Liberty! stern Nymph of soul un-  
tamed;

Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains  
named!

Through the long chain of Alps from mound  
to mound

And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo,  
bound;

Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn  
Have roused her from her sleep: and for-  
est-lawn,

Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps  
resound

And babble of her pastime! — On, dread  
Power!

With such invisible motion speed thy flight,  
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height  
to height,

Through the green vales and through the  
herdsman's bower —

That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,  
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE

1809. 1815

THE Land we from our fathers had in trust,  
And to our children will transmit, or die:

This is our maxim, this our piety;  
And God and Nature say that it is just.

That which we *would* perform in arms — we  
must!

We read the dictate in the infant's eye;  
In the wife's smile; and in the placid sky;

And, at our feet, amid the silent dust  
Of them that were before us. — Sing aloud

Old songs, the precious music of the heart!  
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the  
wind!

While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,  
With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to  
assert

Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

"ALAS! WHAT BOOTS THE LONG  
LABORIOUS QUEST"

1809. 1815

ALAS! what boots the long laborious quest  
Of moral prudence, sought through good  
and ill;

Or pains abstruse — to elevate the will,  
And lead us on to that transcendent rest

Where every passion shall the sway attest  
Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill;

What is it but a vain and curious skill,  
If sapient Germany must lie deprest,

Beneath the brutal sword? — Her haughty  
Schools

Shall blush; and may not we with sorrow  
say —

A few strong instincts and a few plain  
rules,

Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have  
wrought

More for mankind at this unhappy day  
Than all the pride of intellect and thought ?

"AND IS IT AMONG RUDE  
UNTUTORED DALES"

1809. 1815

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,  
There, and there only, that the heart is  
true ?

And, rising to repel or to subdue,  
Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails ?  
Ah no ! though Nature's dread protection  
fails,

There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew  
Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew  
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales  
Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was  
felt

By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,  
Like him of noble birth and noble mind;  
By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear;  
And wanderers of the street, to whom is  
dealt

The bread which without industry they  
find.

"O'ER THE WIDE EARTH, ON  
MOUNTAIN AND ON PLAIN"

1809. 1815

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on  
plain,

Dwells in the affections and the soul of man  
A Godhead, like the universal PAN;

But more exalted, with a brighter train:  
And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,  
Showered equally on city and on field,  
And neither hope nor steadfast promise  
yield

In these usurping times of fear and pain ?  
Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it  
Heaven !

We know the arduous strife, the eternal  
laws

To which the triumph of all good is given,  
High sacrifice, and labour without pause,

Even to the death: — else wherefore should  
the eye

Of man converse with immortality ?

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF  
THE TYROLESE

1809. 1815

It was a *moral* end for which they fought;  
Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to  
shame,

Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved  
an aim,

A resolution, or enlivening thought ?  
Nor hath that moral good been vainly  
sought;

For in their magnanimity and fame  
Powers have they left, an impulse, and a  
claim

Which neither can be overturned nor  
bought.

Sleep, Warriors, sleep ! among your hills  
repose !

We know that ye, beneath the stern control  
Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished  
soul:

And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,  
Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds ! shall  
ye rise

For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

"HAIL, ZARAGOZA ! IF WITH  
UNWET EYE"

1809. 1815

HAIL, Zaragoza ! If with unwet eye  
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,  
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;  
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.  
These desolate remains are trophies high  
Of more than martial courage in the breast  
Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest  
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.  
Blood flowed before thy sight without  
remorse;

Disease consumed thy vitals; War up-  
heaved

The ground beneath thee with volcanic  
force:

Dread trials ! yet encountered and sus-  
tained

Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,  
And law was from necessity received.

"SAY, WHAT IS HONOUR? — 'T IS  
THE FINEST SENSE"

1809. 1815

SAY, what is Honour? — 'T is the finest  
sense

Of *justice* which the human mind can  
frame,

Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,  
And guard the way of life from all offence  
Suffered or done. When lawless violence  
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the  
scale

Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,  
Honour is hopeful elevation, — whence  
Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill  
Endangered States may yield to terms  
unjust;

Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the  
dust —

A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil:  
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust  
Are forfeited; but infamy doth kill.

"THE MARTIAL COURAGE OF A  
DAY IS VAIN"

1809. 1815

THE martial courage of a day is vain,  
An empty noise of death the battle's roar,  
If vital hope be wanting to restore,  
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,  
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a  
strain

Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore  
A weight of hostile corsers; drenched with  
gore

Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped  
with slain.

Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)  
Austria a daughter of her Throne hath sold!  
And her Tyrolean Champion we behold  
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,  
Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as bold,  
To think that such assurance can stand fast!

"BRAVE SCHILL! BY DEATH  
DELIVERED"

1809. 1815

BRAVE Schill! by death delivered, take  
thy flight  
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest

With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,  
Or in the fields of empyrean light.

A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night:  
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sub-  
lime,

Stand in the spacious firmament of time,  
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.

Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame  
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there lives  
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit,  
gives;

To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,  
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed;  
In whose pure sight all virtue doth suc-  
ceed.

"CALL NOT THE ROYAL SWEDE  
UNFORTUNATE"

1809. 1815

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,  
Who never did to Fortune bend the knee;  
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly  
Temptation; and whose kingly name and  
state

Have "perished by his choice, and not his  
fate!"

Hence lives He, to his inner self endeared;  
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,  
He sits a more exalted Potentate,  
Throned in the hearts of men. Should  
Heaven ordain

That this great Servant of a righteous cause  
Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to  
endure,

Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,  
Admonished by these truths, and quench  
all pain

In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

"LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVEN-  
TURER WHO HATH PAID"

1809. 1815

LOOK now on that Adventurer who hath  
paid

His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel slight  
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,  
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made  
By the blind Goddess, — ruthless, undis-  
mayed;

And so hath gained at length a prosperous  
height,

Round which the elements of worldly  
might  
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are  
laid.

O joyless power that stands by lawless  
force!

Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,  
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;  
And, if old judgments keep their sacred  
course,

Him from that height shall Heaven pre-  
cipitate

By violent and ignominious death.

"IS THERE A POWER THAT CAN  
SUSTAIN AND CHEER"

1809. 1815

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer  
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,  
Forced to descend into his destined tomb—  
A dungeon dark! where he must waste the  
year,

And lie cut off from all his heart holds  
dear;

What time his injured country is a stage  
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage  
Of righteous Vengeance side by side ap-  
pear,

Filling from morn to night the heroic scene  
With deeds of hope and everlasting  
praise:—

Say can he think of this with mind serene  
And silent fetters? Yes, if visions bright  
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days  
When he himself was tried in open light

"AH! WHERE IS PALAFOX? NOR  
TONGUE NOR PEN"

1810. 1815

AH! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor  
pen

Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave!  
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the  
wave?

Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken  
Of pitying human nature? Once again  
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion  
brave,

Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,  
And through all Europe cheer desponding  
men

With new-born hope. Unbounded is the  
might

Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.  
Hark, how thy Country triumphs!—Smil-  
ingly

The Eternal looks upon her sword that  
gleams,

Like his own lightning, over mountains  
high.

On rampart, and the banks of all her  
streams.

"IN DUE OBSERVANCE OF AN  
ANCIENT RITE"

1810. 1815

In due observance of an ancient rite,  
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie  
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,  
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments  
white;

And, in like sign of cloudless triumph  
bright,

They bind the unoffending creature's brows  
With happy garlands of the pure white  
rose:

Then do a festal company unite  
In choral song; and, while the uplifted  
cross

Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne  
Uncovered to his grave: 't is closed,—her  
loss

The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs  
must mourn;

But soon, through Christian faith, is grief  
subdued;

And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BIS-  
CAYAN AT ONE OF THOSE  
FUNERALS

1810. 1815

YET, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our  
Foes

With firmer soul, yet labour to regain  
Our ancient freedom; else 't were worse  
than vain

To gather round the bier these festal shows.  
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose  
Becomes not one whose father is a slave:  
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave!  
These venerable mountains now enclose

A people sunk in apathy and fear.  
 If this endure, farewell, for us, all good !  
 The awful light of heavenly innocence  
 Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier;  
 And guilt and shame, from which is no  
 defence,  
 Descend on all that issues from our blood.

#### ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY

1810. 1815

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian  
 ground,  
 And to the people at the Isthmian Games  
 Assembled, He, by a herald's voice, pro-  
 claims

THE LIBERTY OF GREECE: — the words  
 rebound

Until all voices in one voice are drowned;  
 Glad acclamation by which air was rent !  
 And birds, high-flying in the element,  
 Dropped to the earth, astonished at the  
 sound !

Yet were the thoughtful grieved; and still  
 that voice

Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's  
 ear:

Ah ! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so  
 dear:

Ah ! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous  
 joys !

A gift of that which is not to be given  
 By all the blended powers of Earth and  
 Heaven.

#### UPON THE SAME EVENT

1810. 1815

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams  
 of morn

The tidings past of servitude repealed,  
 And of that joy which shook the Isthmian  
 Field,

The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter  
 scorn.

"T is known," cried they, "that he, who  
 would adorn

His envied temples with the Isthmian  
 crown,

Must either win, through effort of his  
 own,

The prize, or be content to see it worn

By more deserving brows. — Yet so ye  
 prop,  
 Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,  
 Your feeble spirits ! Greece her head hath  
 bowed,  
 As if the wreath of liberty thereon  
 Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,  
 Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's  
 top."

#### THE OAK OF GUERNICA

1810. 1815

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde  
 in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable  
 natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella,  
 in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the  
 church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired  
 to this tree, under which they swore to the  
 Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges).  
 What other interest belongs to it in the minds  
 of this people will appear from the following

#### SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME

OAK of Guernica ! Tree of holier power  
 Than that which in Dodona did enshrine  
 (So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine  
 Heard from the depths of its aerial  
 bower --

How canst thou flourish at this blighting  
 hour ?

What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to  
 thee,

Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,  
 The dews of morn, or April's tender  
 shower ?

Stroke merciful and welcome would that be  
 Which should extend thy branches on the  
 ground,

If never more within their shady round  
 Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,  
 Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,  
 Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

#### INDIGNATION OF A HIGH- MINDED SPANIARD

1810. 1815

WE can endure that He should waste our  
 lands,

Despoil our temples, and by sword and  
 flame

Return us to the dust from which we came;



Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands:  
And we can brook the thought that by his  
hands

Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,  
For his delight, a solemn wilderness  
Where all the brave lie dead. But, when  
of bands

Which he will break for us he dares to  
speak,

Of benefits, and of a future day  
When our enlightened minds shall bless his  
sway;

*Then*, the strained heart of fortitude proves  
weak;

Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks  
declare

That he has power to inflict what we lack  
strength to bear.

#### "AVAUNT ALL SPECIOUS PLIANCY OF MIND"

1810. 1815

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind  
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !  
I better like a blunt indifference,  
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined  
To win me at first sight: and be there  
joined

Patience and temperance with this high  
reserve,

Honour that knows the path and will not  
swerve;

Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind;  
And piety towards God. Such men of old  
Were England's native growth; and,  
throughout Spain

(Thanks to high God) forests of such re-  
main:

Then for that Country let our hopes be bold;  
For matched with these shall policy prove  
vain,

Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her  
gold.

#### "O'ERWEENING STATESMEN HAVE FULL LONG RELIED"

1810. 1815

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long  
relied

On fleets and armies, and external wealth:  
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health;

Which shall not fail, though poor men  
cleave with pride

To the paternal floor; or turn aside,  
In the thronged city, from the walks of  
gain,

As being all unworthy to detain  
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.

There are who cannot languish in this strife,  
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good  
Of such high course was felt and under-  
stood;

Who to their Country's cause have bound a  
life

Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given  
To labour and to prayer, to nature, and to  
heaven.

#### THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS

1810. 1815

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast  
From bleak hill-top, and length of march  
by night

Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad  
height —

These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers  
past,

The roving Spanish Bands are reached at  
last,

Charged, and dispersed like foam: but as  
a flight

Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,  
So these, — and, heard of once again, are  
chased

With combinations of long-practised art  
And newly-kindled hope; but they are  
fled —

Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead:  
Where now? — Their sword is at the Foe-  
man's heart;

And thus from year to year his walk they  
thwart,

And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

#### EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA

1810

Those from Chiabrera were chiefly trans-  
lated when Mr. Coleridge was writing his  
Friend, in which periodical my "Essay on  
Epitaphs," written about that time, was first

published. For further notice of Chiabrera, in connection with his Epitaphs, see "Musings at Aquapendente."

I

1810. 1837

WEEP not, beloved Friends ! nor let the air  
For me with sighs be troubled. Not from  
life

Have I been taken; this is genuine life  
And this alone — the life which now I live  
In peace eternal; where desire and joy  
Together move in fellowship without end.—  
Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,  
His tombstone thus should speak for him.

And surely

Small cause there is for that fond wish of  
ours

Long to continue in this world; a world  
That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a  
hope

To good, whereof itself is destitute.

II

1810. 1810

PERHAPS some needful service of the State  
Drew TITUS from the depth of studious  
bowers,

And doomed him to contend in faithless  
courts,

Where gold determines between right and  
wrong.

Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,  
And his pure native genius, lead him back  
To wait upon the bright and gracious  
Muses,

Whom he had early loved. And not in  
vain

Such course he held ! Bologna's learned  
schools

Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and  
hung

With fondness on those sweet Nestorian  
strains.

There pleasure crowned his days; and all  
his thoughts

A roseate fragrance breathed. — O human  
life,

That never art secure from dolorous change !  
Behold a high injunction suddenly

To Arno's side hath brought him, and he  
charmed

A Tuscan audience: but full soon was  
called

To the perpetual silence of the grave.  
Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood  
A Champion steadfast and invincible,  
To quell the rage of literary War !

III

1810. 1810

O THOU who movest onward with a mind  
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in  
haste !

'T will be no fruitless moment. I was born  
Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.  
On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate  
To sacred studies; and the Roman Shep-  
herd

Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous  
flock.

Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had  
power

To escape from many and strange indigni-  
ties;

Was smitten by the great ones of the  
world,

But did not fall; for Virtue braves all  
shocks,

Upon herself resting immoveably.

Me did a kindlier fortune then invite

To serve the glorious Henry, King of  
France,

And in his hands I saw a high reward  
Stretched out for my acceptance, — but  
Death came.

Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how  
false,

How treacherous to her promise, is the  
world;

And trust in God — to whose eternal doom  
Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

IV

1810. 1815

THERE never breathed a man who, when  
his life

Was closing, might not of that life relate

Toils long and hard. — The warrior will  
report

Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in  
the field,

And blast of trumpets. He who hath been  
doomed

To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,  
Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,  
Envy and heart-inquietude, derived

From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.  
I, who on shipboard lived from earliest  
youth,

Could represent the countenance horrible  
Of the vexed waters, and the indignant  
rage

Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years  
Over the well-steered galleys did I rule: —  
From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,  
Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown;  
And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and  
oft:

Of every cloud which in the heavens might  
stir

I knew the force; and hence the rough  
sea's pride

Availed not to my Vessel's overthrow.  
What noble pomp and frequent have not I  
On regal decks beheld! yet in the end  
I learned that one poor moment can suffice  
To equalise the lofty and the low.

We sail the sea of life — a *Calm* One finds,  
And One a *Tempest* — and, the voyage o'er,  
Death is the quiet haven of us all.

If more of my condition ye would know,  
Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang  
Of noble parents; seventy years and three  
Lived I — then yielded to a slow disease.

## V

1810. 1837

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero  
With an untoward fate was long involved  
In odious litigation; and full long,  
Fate harder still! had he to endure assaults  
Of racking malady. And true it is  
That not the less a frank courageous heart  
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain;  
And he was strong to follow in the steps  
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path  
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,  
That might from him be hidden; not a  
track

Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he  
Had traced its windings. — This Savona  
knows,

Yet no sepulchral honours to her Son  
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled  
Only by gold. And now a simple stone  
Inscribed with this memorial here is raised  
By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.  
Think not, O Passenger! who read'st the  
lines,

That an exceeding love hath dazzled me;

No — he was One whose memory ought to  
spread

Where'er Permessus bears an honoured  
name,

And live as long as its pure stream shall  
flow.

## VI

1810. 1815

DESTINED to war from very infancy

Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took

In Malta the white symbol of the Cross:

Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun

Hazard or toil; among the sands was  
seen

Of Libya; and not seldom, on the banks  
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 't was my lot  
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.

So lived I, and repined not at such fate:

This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,  
That stripped of arms I to my end am  
brought

On the soft down of my paternal home.

Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause

To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor  
halt

In thy appointed way, and bear in mind  
How fleeting and how frail is human life!

## VII

1810. 1837

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle  
blood,

And all that generous nurture breeds to  
make

Youth amiable; O friend so true of soul

To fair Aglaia; by what envy moved,

Lelius! has death cut short thy brilliant  
day

In its sweet opening? and what dire mis-  
hap

Has from Savona torn her best delight?

For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease to  
mourn;

And, should the out-pourings of her eyes  
suffice not

For her heart's grief, she will entreat Se-  
beto

Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto

Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to  
death,

In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love!

What profit riches? what does youth avail!  
Dust are our hopes; — I, weeping bitterly,

Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear to pray  
That every gentle Spirit hither led  
May read them, not without some bitter tears.

VIII

1810. 1815

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He  
On whom the duty fell (for at that time  
The father sojourned in a distant land)  
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb  
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved !  
FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had

borne,  
POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house;  
And, when beneath this stone the 'Corse  
was laid,

The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.  
Alas ! the twentieth April of his life  
Had scarcely flowered: and at this early  
time,

By genuine virtue he inspired a hope  
That greatly cheered his country: to his  
kin

He promised comfort; and the flattering  
thoughts

His friends had in their fondness entertained,

He suffered not to languish or decay.

Now is there not good reason to break  
forth

Into a passionate lament ? --- O Soul !

Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,  
Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air;

And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,  
An everlasting spring ! in memory

Of that delightful fragrance which was  
once

From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

IX

1810. 1815

PAUSE, courteous Spirit ! — Balbi suppli-  
cates

That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for  
him

Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst pre-  
fer

A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.

This to the dead by sacred right belongs;

All else is nothing. — Did occasion suit

To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb

Would ill suffice: for Plato's lore sublime,

And all the wisdom of the Stagyrice,  
Enriched and beautified his studious mind:  
With Archimedes also he conversed  
As with a chosen friend; nor did he leave  
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which  
the Nymphs

Twine near their loved Permessus. —  
Finally,

Himself above each lower thought uplift-  
ing,

His ears he closed to listen to the songs

Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old;

And his Permessus found on Lebanon.

A blessed Man ! who of protracted days

Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep;

But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,

Take pride in him ! — O Passenger, fare-  
well !

MATERNAL GRIEF

1810. 1842

This was in part an overflow from the Soli-  
tary's description of his own and his wife's feel-  
ings upon the decease of their children. (See  
"Excursion," book III.)

DEPARTED Child ! I could forget thee  
once

Though at my bosom nursed; this woeful  
gain

Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul

Is present and perpetually abides

A shadow, never, never to be displaced

By the returning substance, seen or touched,

Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my em-  
brace.

Absence and death how differ they ! and  
how

Shall I admit that nothing can restore

What one short sigh so easily re-  
moved ? — <sup>10</sup>

Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,

Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,

O teach me calm submission to thy Will !

The Child she mourned had overstepped  
the pale

Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air

That sanctifies its confines, and partook

Reflected beams of that celestial light

To all the Little-ones on sinful earth

Not unvouchsafed — a light that warmed  
and cheered

Those several qualities of heart and mind <sup>20</sup>

Which, in her own blest nature, rooted deep,

Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,  
And not hers only, their peculiar charms  
Unfolded, — beauty, for its present self,  
And for its promises to future years,  
With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn  
A pair of Leverets each provoking each  
To a continuance of their fearless sport,  
Two separate Creatures in their several gifts

Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all  
That Nature prompts them to display,  
their looks,

Their starts of motion and their fits of rest,

An undistinguishable style appears  
And character of gladness, as if Spring  
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the spirit

Of the rejoicing morning were their own?

Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained  
And her twin Brother, had the parent seen,

Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey,

Death in a moment parted them, and left  
The Mother, in her turns of anguish, worse  
Than desolate; for oft-times from the sound

Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear child,  
He knew it not) and from his happiest looks,

Did she extract the food of self-reproach,  
As one that lived ungrateful for the stay  
By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed  
And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,  
Now first acquainted with distress and grief,

Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shunned  
with fear

Her sad approach, and stole away to find,  
In his known haunts of joy where'er he might,

A more congenial object. But, as time  
Softened her pangs and reconciled the child  
To what he saw, he gradually returned,  
Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew  
A broken intercourse; and, while his eyes  
Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe  
Turned upon her who bore him, she would stoop

To imprint a kiss that lacked not power to spread

Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,  
And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they  
were calmed

And cheered; and now together breathe  
fresh air

In open fields; and when the glare of day  
Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish  
Befriends the observance, readily they join  
In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,

Which he with flowers hath planted, find-  
ing there

Amusement, where the Mother does not miss

Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf  
In prayer, yet blending with that solemn rite

Of pious faith the vanities of grief;  
For such, by pitying Angels and by Spirits  
Transferred to regions upon which the clouds

Of our weak nature rest not, must be deemed

Those willing tears, and unforbidden sighs,  
And all those tokens of a cherished sorrow,  
Which, soothed and sweetened by the grace of Heaven

As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,  
Immortal as the love that gave it being.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD

1811. 1815

Written at Allanbank, Grasmere. Picture  
of my Daughter Catharine, who died the year  
after.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;  
And Innocence hath privilege in her  
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;  
And feats of cunning; and the pretty round  
Of trespasses, affected to provoke  
Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.  
And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
Not less if unattended and alone  
Than when both young and old sit gathered  
round

And take delight in its activity;  
Even so this happy Creature of herself  
Is all-sufficient, solitude to her  
Is blithe society, who fills the air  
With gladness and involuntary songs.  
Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's

Forth-startled from the fern where she lay  
couch'd;  
Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir  
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-  
flowers,  
Or from before it chasing wantonly  
The many-coloured images impest  
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

## SPANISH GUERRILLAS

1811. 1815

THEY seek, are sought; to daily battle led,  
Shrink not, though far outnumbered by  
their Foes,  
For they have learnt to open and to close  
The ridges of grim war; and at their head  
Are captains such as erst their country  
bred  
Or fostered, self-supported chiefs, — like  
those  
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose;  
Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian  
fled.  
In One who lived unknown a shepherd's  
life  
Redoubted Viriatus breathes again;  
And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,  
With that great Leader vies, who, sick of  
strife  
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid  
In some green island of the western main.

"THE POWER OF ARMIES IS A  
VISIBLE THING"

1811. 1815

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,  
Formal, and circumscribed in time and  
space;  
But who the limits of that power shall  
trace  
Which a brave People into light can bring  
Or hide, at will, — for freedom combating  
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may  
chase,  
No eye can follow, to a fatal place  
That power, that spirit, whether on the  
wing  
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the  
wind  
Within its awful caves. — From year to  
year

Springs this indigenous produce far and near;  
No craft this subtle element can bind,  
Rising like water from the soil, to find  
In every nook a lip that it may cheer,

"HERE PAUSE: THE POET  
CLAIMS AT LEAST THIS  
PRAISE"

1811. 1815

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this  
praise,  
That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope  
Of his pure song, which did not shrink from  
hope  
In the worst moment of these evil days;  
From hope, the paramount duty that  
Heaven lays,  
For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.  
Never may from our souls one truth de-  
part —  
That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye;  
Nor — touched with due abhorrence of *their*  
guilt  
For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood  
is spilt,  
And justice labours in extremity —  
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,  
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

## EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,  
BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND

1811. 1842

This poem opened, when first written, with a paragraph that has been transferred as an introduction to the first series of my Scotch Memorials. The journey, of which the first part is here described, was from Grasmere to Bootle on the south-west coast of Cumberland, the whole among mountain roads through a beautiful country; and we had fine weather. The verses end with our breakfast at the head of Yewdale in a yeoman's house, which, like all the other property in that sequestered vale, has passed or is passing into the hands of Mr. James Marshall of Monk Coniston, — in Mr. Knott's, the late owner's, time called Waterhead. Our hostess married a Mr. Oldfield, a lieutenant in the Navy: they lived together for some time at Hacket, where she still resides as

his widow. It was in front of that house, on the mountain side, near which stood the peasant who, while we were passing at a distance, saluted us, waving a kerchief in her hand as described in the poem. (This matron and her husband were then residing at the Hackett. The house and its inmates are referred to in the fifth book of the "Excursion," in the passage beginning —

"You behold,  
High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck." — J. C.)

The dog which we met with soon after our starting belonged to Mr. Rowlandson, who for forty years was curate of Grasmere in place of the rector, who lived to extreme old age in a state of insanity. Of this Mr. R. much might be said both with reference to his character, and the way in which he was regarded by his parishioners. He was a man of robust frame, had a firm voice and authoritative manner, of strong natural talents, of which he was himself conscious, for he has been heard to say (it grieves me to add) with an oath — "If I had been brought up at college I should have been a bishop." Two vices used to struggle in him for mastery, avarice and the love of strong drink: but avarice, as is common in like cases, always got the better of its opponent; for, though he was often intoxicated, it was never, I believe, at his own expense. As has been said of one in a more exalted station, he would take any *given* quantity. I have heard a story of him which is worth the telling. One summer's morning, our Grasmere curate, after a night's carouse in the vale of Langdale, on his return home, having reached a point near which the whole of the vale of Grasmere might be seen with the lake immediately below him, stepped aside and sat down on the turf. After looking for some time at the landscape, then in the perfection of its morning beauty, he exclaimed — "Good God, that I should have led so long such a life in such a place!" — This no doubt was deeply felt by him at the time, but I am not authorised to say that any noticeable amendment followed. Penuriousness strengthened upon him as his body grew feebler with age. He had purchased property and kept some land in his own hands, but he could not find in his heart to lay out the necessary hire for labourers at the proper season, and consequently he has often been seen in half-dotage working his hay in the month of November by moonlight, a melancholy sight which I myself have witnessed. Notwithstanding all that has been said, this man, on account of his talents and superior education, was looked up to by his parishioners, who, without a single exception, lived at that time (and most of them upon

their own small inheritances) in a state of republican equality, a condition favourable to the growth of kindly feelings among them, and in a striking degree exclusive to temptations to gross vice and scandalous behaviour. As a pastor their curate did little or nothing for them; but what could more strikingly set forth the efficacy of the Church of England through its Ordinances and Liturgy than that, in spite of the unworthiness of the minister, his church was regularly attended; and, though there was not much appearance in his flock of what might be called animated piety, intoxication was rare, and dissolute morals unknown? With the Bible they were for the most part well acquainted; and, as was strikingly shown when they were under affliction, must have been supported and comforted by habitual belief in those truths which it is the aim of the Church to inculcate. — *Loughrigg Tarn.* This beautiful pool and the surrounding scene are minutely described in my little Book on the Lakes. Sir G. H. Beaumont, in the earlier part of his life, was induced, by his love of nature and the art of painting, to take up his abode at Old Brathay, about three miles from this spot, so that he must have seen it under many aspects; and he was so much pleased with it that he purchased the Tarn with a view to build, near it, such a residence as is alluded to in this Epistle. Baronets and knights were not so common in that day as now, and Sir Michael le Fleming, not liking to have a rival in that kind of distinction so near him, claimed a sort of lordship over the territory, and showed dispositions little in unison with those of Sir G. Beaumont, who was eminently a lover of peace. The project of building was in consequence given up. Sir George retaining possession of the Tarn. Many years afterwards a Kendal tradesman born upon its banks applied to me for the purchase of it, and accordingly it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money was laid out under my direction upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew trees to be planted in Grasmere churchyard; two were planted in each enclosure, with a view to remove, after a certain time, the one which threw the least. After several years, the stonier plant being left, the others were taken up and placed in other parts of the same churchyard, and were adequately fenced at the expense and under the care of the late Mr. Barber, Mr. Greenwood, and myself: the whole eight are now thriving, and are already an ornament to a place which, during late years, has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of

them in very bad taste ; from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free. See the lines in the sixth book of the "Excursion" beginning — "Green is the churchyard, beautiful and green." The "Epistle" to which these notes refer, though written so far back as 1804, was carefully revised so late as 1842, previous to its publication. I am loth to add, that it was never seen by the person to whom it is addressed. So sensible am I of the deficiencies in all that I write, and so far does everything that I attempt fall short of what I wish it to be, that even private publication, if such a term may be allowed, requires more resolution than I can command. I have written to give vent to my own mind, and not without hope that, some time or other, kindred minds might benefit by my labours : but I am inclined to believe I should never have ventured to send forth any verses of mine to the world if it had not been done on the pressure of personal occasions. Had I been a rich man, my productions, like this "Epistle," the tragedy of the "Borderers," etc., would most likely have been confined to manuscript.

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet  
Lake,  
From the Vale's peace which all her fields  
partake,  
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's  
shore  
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless  
roar;  
While, day by day, grim neighbour ! huge  
Black Comb  
Frowns deepening visibly his native gloom,  
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite  
What on the Plain we have of warmth and  
light,  
In his own storms he hides himself from  
sight.  
Rough is the time; and thoughts, that  
would be free 10  
From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to  
thee;  
Turn from a spot where neither sheltered  
road  
Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps  
abroad;  
Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it  
might  
Attained a stature twice a tall man's height,  
Hopeless of further growth, and brown and  
sere  
Through half the summer, stands with top  
cut sheer,

Like an unshifting weathercock which  
proves  
How cold the quarter that the wind best  
loves,  
Or like a Centinel that, evermore 20  
Darkening the window, ill defends the door  
Of this unfinished house — a Fortress bare,  
Where strength has been the Builder's only  
care;  
Whose rugged walls may still for years  
demand  
The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.  
— This Dwelling's Inmate more than three  
weeks space  
And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,  
I — of whose touch the fiddle would com-  
plain,  
Whose breath would labour at the flute in  
vain,  
In music all unversed, nor blessed with  
skill 30  
A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,  
Tired of my books, a scanty company !  
And tired of listening to the boisterous  
sea —  
Pace between door and window muttering  
rhyme.  
An old resource to cheat a froward time !  
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their  
shame ?)  
Would tempt me to renounce that humble  
aim.  
— But if there be a Muse who, free to take  
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake  
Those heights (like Phœbus when his  
golden locks 40  
He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)  
And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail  
Trips down the pathways of some winding  
dale;  
Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores  
To fishers mending nets beside their doors;  
Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,  
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,  
Or listens to its play among the boughs  
Above her head and so forgets her vows —  
If such a Visitant of Earth there be 50  
And she would deign this day to smile on  
me  
And aid my verse, content with local bounds  
Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,  
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which  
we tell  
Without reserve to those whom we love  
well —



Then haply, Beaumont ! words in current  
clear

Will flow, and on a welcome page appear  
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish  
here.

What shall I treat of ? News from Mona's  
Isle ?

Such have we, but unvaried in its style ; 60  
No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence  
And wherefore fugitive or on what pre-  
tence ;

Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind  
Most restlessly alive when most confined.

Ask not of me, whose tongue can best  
appease

The mighty tumults of the HOUSE OF KEYS ;  
The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer  
gained,

What slopes are planted, or what mosses  
drained :

An eye of fancy only can I cast

On that proud pageant now at hand or  
past, 70

When full five hundred boats in trim array,  
With nets and sails outspread and streamers  
gay,

And chanted hymns and stiller voice of  
prayer,

For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep re-  
pair,

Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine  
Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,

But with a wilderness of waves between ;

And by conjecture only can we speak

Of aught transacted there in bay or creek ;  
No tidings reach us thence from town or  
field, 81

Only faint news her mountain sunbeams  
yield,

And some we gather from the misty air,  
And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph,  
declare.

But these poetic mysteries I withhold ;  
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,  
And should the colder fit with You be on  
When You might read, my credit would be  
gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen  
engage,

And nearer interests culled from the open-  
ing stage 90

Of our migration. — Ere the welcome dawn  
Had from the east her silver star with-  
drawn,

The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door,  
Thoughtfully freighted with a various store ;  
And long or ere the uprising of the Sun  
O'er dew-damp'd dust our journey was  
begun,

A needful journey, under favouring skies,  
Through peopled Vales ; yet something in  
the guise

Of those old Patriarchs when from well to  
well

They roamed through Wastes where now  
the tented Arabs dwell. 100

Say first, to whom did we the charge  
confide,

Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide  
Up many a sharply-twining road and down,  
And over many a wide hill's craggy crown,  
Through the quick turns of many a hollow  
nook,

And the rough bed of many an unbridged  
brook ?

A blooming Lass — who in her better hand  
Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command  
When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,  
Skilful and bold, the horse and burthened  
sled 110

From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's  
head.

What could go wrong with such a Charioteer  
For goods and chattels, or those Infants  
dear,

A Pair who smilingly sate side by side,  
Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide  
Whose free embraces we were bound to seek,  
Would their lost strength restore and  
freshen the pale cheek ?

Such hope did either Parent entertain  
Pacing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon  
took flight, 120

For lo ! an uncouth melancholy sight —  
On a green bank a creature stood forlorn  
Just half protruded to the light of morn,  
Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row  
thorn

The Figure called to mind a beast of prey  
Stript of its frightful powers by slow decay,  
And, though no longer upon rapine bent,  
Dim memory keeping of its old intent.

We started, looked again with anxious eyes,  
And in that griesly object recognise 130

The Curate's Dog — his long-tried friend,  
for they,

As well we knew, together had grown  
grey.

The Master died, his drooping servant's  
grief

Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief;  
Yet still he lived in pining discontent,  
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent;  
Hence whole day wanderings, broken  
nightly sleeps

And lonesome watch that out of doors he  
keeps;

Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute !  
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank,  
mute, 140

And of all visible motion destitute,  
So that the very heaving of his breath  
Seemed stopt, though by some other power  
than death.

Long as we gazed upon the form and face,  
A mild domestic pity kept its place,  
Unseared by thronging fancies of strange  
hue

That haunted us in spite of what we knew.  
Even now I sometimes think of him as lost  
In second-sight appearances, or crost  
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the ground,  
On which he stood, by spells unnatural  
bound, 151

Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to  
wait

In days of old romance at Archinago's  
gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law ful-  
filled,

The choristers in every grove had stilled;  
But we, we lacked not music of our own,  
For lightsome Fanny had thus early thrown,  
Mid the gay prattle of those infant tongues,  
Some notes prelusive, from the round of  
songs

With which, more zealous than the liveliest  
bird 160

That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,  
Her work and her work's partners she can  
cheer,

The whole day long, and all days of the  
year.

Thus gladdened from our own dear Vale  
we pass

And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass !  
To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and bright  
as heaven,

Such name Italian fancy would have given,  
Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose  
That yet disturb not its concealed repose  
More than the feeblest wind that idly  
blows. 170

Ah, Beaumont ! when an opening in the  
road

Stopped me at once by charm of what it  
showed,

The encircling region vividly exprest  
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest —  
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy  
bield,

And the smooth green of many a pendent  
field,

And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,  
A little daring would-be waterfall,

One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,  
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath, 180  
With here and there a faint imperfect  
gleam

Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam —  
What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,  
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and  
sleep,

When Nature's self, amid such blending,  
seems

To render visible her own soft dreams,  
If, mixed with what appeared of rock,  
lawn, wood,

Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,  
A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by  
Thee

Designed to rise in humble privacy, 190  
A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,

Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head  
Half hid in native trees. Alas 't is not,  
Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot  
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,  
And thought in silence, with regret too keen,  
Of unexperienced joys that might have  
been;

Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,  
And golden summer days uniting cheerful  
hearts.

But time, irrevocable time, is flown. 200  
And let us utter thanks for blessings sown  
And reaped — what hath been, and what is,  
our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,  
Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;  
Such shout as many a sportive echo meeting  
Oft-times from Alpine *chalets* sends a  
greeting.

Whence the blithe hail ? behold a Peasant  
stand

On high, a kerchief waving in her hand !  
Not unexpected that by early day

Our little Band would thrid this mountain  
way, 210

Before her cottage on the bright hill side  
 She hath advanced with hope to be descried.  
 Right gladly answering signals we displayed,  
 Moving along a tract of morning shade,  
 And vocal wishes sent of like good will  
 To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill —  
 Luminous region, fair as if the prime  
 Were tempting all astir to look aloft or  
 climb;

Only the centre of the shining cot  
 With door left open makes a gloomy spot,  
 Emblem of those dark corners sometimes  
 found

Within the happiest breast on earthly  
 ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream and  
 vale,

And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we scale;  
 Descend, and reach, in Yewdale's depths,  
 a plain

With haycocks studded, striped with  
 yellowing grain —

An area level as a Lake and spread  
 Under a rock too steep for man to tread,  
 Where sheltered from the north and bleak  
 northwest

Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest, <sup>230</sup>  
 Fearless of all assaults that would her  
 brood molest.

Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but  
 hark,

At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's  
 bark,

Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of  
 state,

But the whole household, that our coming  
 wait.

With Young and Old warm greetings we  
 exchange,

And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly  
 Grange

Press forward by the teasing dogs unscared.  
 Entering, we find the morning meal pre-  
 pared:

So down we sit, though not till each had cast <sup>239</sup>  
 Pleased looks around the delicate repast —  
 Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from  
 the nest,

With amber honey from the mountain's  
 breast;

Strawberries from lane or woodland, offer-  
 ing wild

Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;  
 Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie  
 Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality

Where simple art with bounteous nature  
 vied,  
 And cottage comfort shunned not seemly  
 pride.

Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the  
 feast, <sup>250</sup>  
 If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,  
 Words by thy presence unrestrained may  
 speak

Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek  
 Instinct with light whose sweetest promise  
 lies,

Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes,  
 Dark but to every gentle feeling true,  
 As if their lustre flowed from ether's purest  
 blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have been  
 wept

By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept,  
 Beside that hearth what sighs may have  
 been heaved <sup>260</sup>

For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved  
 By fortitude and patience, and the grace  
 Of heaven in pity visiting the place.

Not unadvisedly those secret springs  
 I leave unsearched: enough that memory  
 clings,

Here as elsewhere, to notices that make  
 Their own significance for hearts awake,  
 To rural incidents, whose genial powers  
 Filled with delight three summer morning  
 hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay  
 That through our gipsy travel cheered the  
 way; <sup>271</sup>

But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun  
 Laughs at my pains, and seems to say, "Be  
 done."

Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, re-  
 prove

This humble offering made by Truth to  
 Love,

Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break  
 a spell

Which might have else been on me yet: —  
 FAREWELL.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPI-  
 STLE THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COM-  
 POSITION

1841. 1842

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest  
 Take those dear young Ones to a fearless  
 nest;

And in Death's arms has long reposed the  
Friend  
For whom this simple Register was penned.  
Thanks to the moth that spared it for our  
eyes;  
And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may  
prize,  
Moved by the touch of kindred sympathies.  
For — save the calm, repentance sheds o'er  
strife  
Raised by remembrances of misused life,  
The light from past endeavours purely willed  
And by Heaven's favour happily fulfilled;  
Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may  
share  
The joys of the Departed — what so fair  
As blameless pleasure, not without some  
tears,  
Reviewed through Love's transparent veil  
of years ?

#### UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAU- TIFUL PICTURE

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

1811. 1815

This was written when we dwelt in the Parsonage at Grasmere. The principal features of the picture are Bredon Hill and Clond Hill near Coleorton. I shall never forget the happy feeling with which my heart was filled when I was impelled to compose this Sonnet. We resided only two years in this house; and during the last half of the time, which was after this poem had been written, we lost our two children, Thomas and Catharine. Our sorrow upon these events often brought it to my mind, and cast me upon the support to which the last line of it gives expression —

“ The appropriate calm of blest eternity.”

It is scarcely necessary to add that we still possess the Picture.

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power  
could stay  
Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape;  
Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,  
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the  
day;  
Which stopped that band of travellers on  
their way,  
Ere they were lost within the shady wood;  
And showed the Bark upon the glassy flood  
For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.

Soul-soothing Art ! whom Morning, Noon-  
tide, Even,  
Do serve with all their changeful pageantry;  
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast  
given  
To one brief moment caught from fleeting  
time  
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

#### INSCRIPTIONS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE  
SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.,  
LEICESTERSHIRE.

1808. 1815

In the grounds of Coleorton these verses are engraved on a stone placed near the Tree, which was thriving and spreading when I saw it in the summer of 1841.

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the  
pine,  
Will not unwillingly their place resign;  
If but the Cedar thrive that near them  
stands,  
Planted by Beaumont's and by Words-  
worth's hands.  
One wooed the silent Art with studious  
pains:  
These groves have heard the Other's pen-  
sive strains;  
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite  
By interchange of knowledge and delight.  
May Nature's kindest powers sustain the  
Tree,  
And Love protect it from all injury !  
And when its potent branches, wide out-  
thrown,  
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,  
Here may some Painter sit in future  
days,  
Some future Poet meditate his lays;  
Not mindless of that distant age renowned  
When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,  
The haunt of him who sang how spear and  
shield  
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;  
And of that famous Youth, full soon re-  
moved  
From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self  
approved,  
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend be-  
loved.

## IN A GARDEN OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.

1811. 1815

This Niche is in the sandstone-rock in the winter-garden at Coleorton, which garden, as has been elsewhere said, was made under our direction out of an old unsightly quarry. While the labourers were at work, Mrs. Wordsworth, my Sister, and I used to amuse ourselves occasionally in scooping this seat out of the soft stone. It is of the size, with something of the appearance, of a Stall in a Cathedral. This inscription is not engraven, as the former and the two following are, in the grounds.

OFT is the medal faithful to its trust  
When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust;

And 'tis a common ordinance of fate  
That things obscure and small outlive the great:

Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim

Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,  
And all its stately trees, are passed away,  
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,  
Perchance may still survive. And be it known

That it was scooped within the living stone, —

Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains  
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,  
But by an industry that wrought in love;  
With help from female hands, that proudly strove

To aid the work, what time these walks and bowers

Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS

1808. 1815

YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,

Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's return;

And be not slow a stately growth to rear  
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,

Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle; —

That may recall to mind that awful Pile  
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,

In the last sanctity of fame is laid.

— There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep

Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,

Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear

Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear:

Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I  
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;

From youth a zealous follower of the Art  
That he professed; attached to him in heart;

Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride  
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

## FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON

1811. 1815

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,

Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground

Stand yet, but, Stranger ! hidden from thy view,

The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;  
Erst a religious House, which day and night  
With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite:

And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth

To honourable Men of various worth:

There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,  
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child;

There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,

Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks;

Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,  
Heart - breaking tears, and melancholy dreams

Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,

With which his genius shook the buskined stage.

Communities are lost, and Empires die,  
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;  
They perish;— but the Intellect can raise,  
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er  
decays.

### SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT  
AMONG THE PASTORAL VALES OF  
WESTMORELAND

1812. 1820

The belief on which this is founded I have  
often heard expressed by an old neighbour of  
Grasmere.

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel !  
Night has brought the welcome hour,  
When the weary fingers feel  
Help, as if from faery power;  
Dewy night o'ershades the ground;  
Turn the swift wheel round and round !

Now, beneath the starry sky,  
Couch the widely-scattered sheep;—  
Ply the pleasant labour, ply !  
For the spindle, while they sleep,  
Runs with speed more smooth and fine,  
Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred  
By a glance from fickle eyes;  
But true love is like the thread  
Which the kindly wool supplies,  
When the flocks are all at rest  
Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

### COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE

1812. 1815

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribands  
gay,  
These humble nuptials to proclaim or  
grace ?  
Angels of love, look down upon the place;  
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day !  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride  
display  
Even for such promise:—serious is her  
face,

Modest her mien; and she, whose thoughts  
keep pace

With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid  
appear;

No disproportion in her soul, no strife:  
But, when the closer view of wedded life  
Hath shown that nothing human can be  
clear

From frailty, for that insight may the Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

### WATER-FOWL

OBSERVED FREQUENTLY OVER THE  
LAKES OF RYDALE AND GRASMERE

1812. 1827

" Let me be allowed the aid of verse to de-  
scribe the evolutions which these visitants  
sometimes perform, on a fine day towards the  
close of winter."— *Extract from the Author's  
Book on the Lakes.*

MARK how the feathered tenants of the  
flood,  
With grace of motion that might scarcely  
seem

Inferior to angelical, prolong  
Their curious pastime ! shaping in mid air  
(And sometimes with ambitious wing that  
soars

High as the level of the mountain-tops)  
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—  
Their own domain; but ever, while intent  
On tracing and retracing that large round,  
Their jubilant activity evolves  
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
Upward and downward, progress intricate  
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
Their indefatigable flight. 'T is done—  
Ten times, or more, I fancied it had  
ceased;

But lo ! the vanished company again  
Ascending; they approach—I hear their  
wings,  
Faint, faint at first; and then an eager  
sound,

Past in a moment—and as faint again !  
They tempt the sun to sport amid their  
plumes;

They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
To show them a fair image; 't is themselves,  
Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering  
plain,

Painted more soft and fair as they descend  
Almost to touch; — then up again aloft,  
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
As if they scorned both resting-place and  
rest !

### VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB

1813. 1815

Mrs. Wordsworth and I, as mentioned in the  
"Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont," lived some time  
under its shadow.

THIS Height a ministering Angel might  
select:

For from the summit of BLACK COMB  
(dread name

Derived from clouds and storms !) the  
amplest range

Of unobstructed prospect may be seen

That British ground commands: — low  
dusty tracts,

Where Trent is nursed, far southward !  
Cambrian hills

To the south-west, a multitudinous show;

And, in a line of eye-sight linked with  
these,

The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth  
To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and  
Clyde: —

Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes  
forth

Gigantic mountains rough with crags; be-  
neath,

Right at the imperial station's western base  
Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched

Far into silent regions blue and pale; —

And visibly engirding Mona's Isle

That, as we left the plain, before our sight  
Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly  
(Above the convex of the watery globe)

Into clear view the cultured fields that  
streak

Her habitable shores, but now appears  
A dwindled object, and submits to lie

At the spectator's feet. — Yon azure ridge,  
Is it a perishable cloud ? Or there

Do we behold the line of Erin's coast ?

Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-  
swain

(Like the bright confines of another world)  
Not doubtfully perceived. — Look home-  
ward now !

In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene  
The spectacle, how pure ! — Of Nature's  
works,

In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,  
A revelation infinite it seems;

Display august of man's inheritance,  
Of Britain's calm felicity and power !

### WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PEN- CIL ON A STONE, ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB

1813. 1815

The circumstance alluded to at the conclu-  
sion of these verses was told me by Dr. Sat-  
terthwaite, who was Incumbent of Bootle, a  
small town at the foot of Black Comb. He had  
the particulars from one of the engineers who  
was employed in making trigonometrical sur-  
veys of that region.

STAY, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy  
limbs

On this commodious Seat ! for much re-  
mains

Of hard ascent before thou reach the top  
Of this huge Eminence, — from blackness  
named,

And, to far-travelled storms of sea and  
land,

A favourite spot of tournament and war !

But thee may no such boisterous visitants  
Molest; may gentle breezes fan thy brow;

And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air

Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,

From centre to circumference, unveiled !

Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy  
rest,

That on the summit whither thou art bound,  
A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,

With books supplied and instruments of  
art,

To measure height and distance; lonely  
task,

Week after week pursued ! — To him was  
given

Full many a glimpse (but sparingly be-  
stowed

On timid man) of Nature's processes

Upon the exalted hills. He made report

That once, while there he plied his studious  
work

Within that canvas Dwelling, colours,  
lines,

And the whole surface of the out-spread  
map,  
Became invisible: for all around  
Had darkness fallen — unthreatened, un-  
proclaimed —  
As if the golden day itself had been  
Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,  
In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,  
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

NOVEMBER 1813

1813. 1815

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces  
bright,  
Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow

Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or  
woe,  
Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,  
And lamentably wrapt in twofold night,  
Whom no weak hopes deceived; whose  
mind ensued,  
Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,  
Peace that should claim respect from law-  
less Might.  
Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray  
divine  
To his forlorn condition! let thy grace  
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine;  
Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace  
(Though it were only for a moment's space)  
The triumphs of this hour; for they are  
THINE!

## THE EXCURSION

1795 1814. 1814

Something must now be said of this poem, but chiefly, as has been done through the whole of these notes, with reference to my personal friends, and especially to her who has perseveringly taken them down from my dictation. Towards the close of the first book stand the lines that were first written, beginning, "Nine tedious years," and ending, "Last human tenant of these ruined walls." These were composed in '95 at Racedown; and for several passages describing the employment and demeanour of Margaret during her affliction, I was indebted to observations made in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Alfoxden in Somersetshire, where I resided in '97 and '98. The lines towards the conclusion of the fourth book — beginning, "For, the man, who, in this spirit," to the words "intellectual soul" — were in order of time composed the next, either at Racedown or Alfoxden, I do not remember which. The rest of the poem was written in the vale of Grasmere, chiefly during our residence at Allan Bank. The long poem on my own education was, together with many minor poems, composed while we lived at the cottage at Townend. Perhaps my purpose of giving an additional interest to these my poems in the eyes of my nearest and dearest friends may be promoted by saying a few words upon the character of the Wanderer, the Solitary, and the Pastor, and some other of the persons introduced. And first, of the principal one, the Wanderer. My lamented friend Southey (for this is written a month after his decease) used to say that had he been born a papist, the course of life which would in all probability have been his was the one for which he was most fitted and most to his mind. — that of a Benedictine monk in a convent, furnished, as many once were and some still are, with an inexhaustible library. *Books*, as appears from many passages in his writings, and as was evident to those who had opportunities of observing his daily life, were in fact *his passion*; and *wandering*, I can with truth affirm, was *mine*; but this propensity in me was happily counteracted by inability from want of fortune to fulfil my wishes. But, had I been born in a class which would have deprived me of what is called a liberal education, it is not unlikely that, being strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my Pedlar passed the greater part of his days. At all events, I am here called upon freely to acknowledge that the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances. Nevertheless, much of what he says and does had an external existence that fell under my own youthful and subsequent observation. An individual named Patrick, by birth and education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years, and afterwards settled in the town of Kendal. He married a kinswoman of my wife's, and her sister Sarah was brought up from her ninth year under this good man's roof. My own imaginations I was happy to find clothed in reality, and fresh ones suggested, by what she reported of this man's tenderness of heart, his strong and pure imagination, and his solid attainments in literature, chiefly religious whether in prose or verse. At Hawkshead also, while I was a schoolboy, there occasionally resided a Packman (the name then generally given to persons of this calling)



with whom I had frequent conversations upon what had befallen him, and what he had observed, during his wandering life; and, as was natural, we took much to each other: and, upon the subject of *Pedlarism* in general, as *then* followed, and its favourableness to an intimate knowledge of human concerns, not merely among the humbler classes of society, I need say nothing here in addition to what is to be found in the "Excursion," and a note attached to it. Now for the Solitary. Of him I have much less to say. Not long after we took up our abode at Gramere, came to reside there, from what motive I either never knew or have forgotten, a Scotchman a little past the middle of life, who had for many years been chaplain to a Highland regiment. He was in no respect, as far as I know, an interesting character, though in his appearance there was a good deal that attracted attention, as if he had been shattered in fortune and not happy in mind. Of his quondam position I availed myself, to connect with the Wanderer, also a Scotchman, a character suitable to my purpose, the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may now say, a Mr. Fawcett, a preacher at a dissenting meeting-house at the Old Jewry. It happened to me several times to be one of his congregation through my connection with Mr. Nicholson of Cateaton Street, who at that time, when I had not many acquaintances in London, used often to invite me to dine with him on Sundays; and I took that opportunity (Mr. N. being a dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man. He published a poem on war, which had a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I should otherwise have done. But his Christianity was probably never very deeply rooted; and, like many others in those times of like showy talents, he had not strength of character to withstand the effects of the French Revolution, and of the wild and lax opinions which had done so much towards producing it, and far more in carrying it forward in its extremes. Poor Fawcett, I have been told, became pretty much such a person as I have described; and early disappeared from the stage, having fallen into habits of intemperance, which I have heard (though I will not answer for the fact) hastened his death. Of him I need say no more: there were many like him at that time, which the world will never be without, but which were more numerous then for reasons too obvious to be dwelt upon.

To what is said of the Pastor in the poem I have little to add, but what may be deemed superfluous. It has ever appeared to me highly favourable to the beneficial influence of the Church of England upon all gradations and classes of society, that the patronage of its benefices is in numerous instances attached to the estates of noble families of ancient gentry; and accordingly I am gratified by the opportunity afforded me in the "Excursion," to pourtray the character of a country clergyman of more than ordinary talents, born and bred in the upper ranks of society so as to partake of their refinements, and at the same time brought by his pastoral office and his love of rural life into intimate connection with the peasantry of his native district. To illustrate the relation which in my mind this Pastor bore to the Wanderer, and the resemblance between them, or rather the points of community in their nature, I likened one to an oak and the other to a sycamore; and, having here referred to this comparison, I need only add, I had no one individual in my mind, wishing rather to embody this idea than to break in upon the simplicity of it, by traits of individual character or of any peculiarity of opinion.

And now for a few words upon the scene where these interviews and conversations are supposed to occur. The scene of the first book of the poem is, I must own, laid in a tract of country not sufficiently near to that which soon comes into view in the second book, to agree with the fact. All that relates to Margaret and the ruined cottage, etc., was taken from observations made in the south-west of England, and certainly it would require more than seven-league boots to stretch in one morning from a common in Somersetshire or Dorsetshire to the heights of Furness Fells and the deep valleys they embosom. For thus dealing with space I need make, I trust, no apology, but my friends may be amused by the truth. In the poem, I suppose that the Pedlar and I ascended from a plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the vale. We ascended the hill and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea-Tarn, chosen by the Solitary for his retreat. After we quit his cottage, passing over a low ridge we descend into another vale, that of Little Langdale, towards the head of which stands, embowered or partly shaded by yews and other trees, something between a cottage and a mansion or gentleman's house such as they once were in this country. This I convert into the Parsonage, and at the same time, and as by the waving of a magic wand, I turn the comparatively confined vale of Langdale, its Tarn, and the rude chapel which once adorned the valley, into the stately and comparatively spacious vale of Gramere, its Lake, and its ancient Parish Church; and upon the side of Loughrigg Fell, at the foot

of the Lake, and looking down upon it and the whole vale and its encompassing mountains, the Pastor is supposed by me to stand, when at sunset he addresses his companions in words which I hope my readers will remember, or I should not have taken the trouble of giving so much in detail the materials on which my mind actually worked. Now for a few particulars of *fact* respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters are described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here, that the lines beginning, "She was a woman of a steady mind," faithfully delineate, as far as they go, the character possessed in common by many women whom it has been my happiness to know in humble life; and that several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying and doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses and trials under which different persons were suffering, some of them strangers to me, and others daily under my notice. I was born too late to have a distinct remembrance of the origin of the American war, but the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in '93, opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the Female Vagrant as told in the poem on "Guilt and Sorrow." The account given by the Solitary towards the close of the second book, in all that belongs to the character of the Old Man, was taken from a Grasmere pauper, who was boarded in the last house quitting the vale on the road to Ambleside: the character of his hostess, and all that befell the poor man upon the mountain, belong to Paterdale: the woman I knew well; her name was ——— J——, and she was exactly such a person as I describe. The ruins of the old chapel, among which the man was found lying, may yet be traced, and stood upon the ridge that divides Paterdale from Boardale and Martindale, having been placed there for the convenience of both districts. The glorious appearance disclosed above and among the mountains was described partly from what my friend Mr. Luff, who then lived in Paterdale, witnessed upon that melancholy occasion, and partly from what Mrs. Wordsworth and I had seen in company with Sir George and Lady Beaumont above Hartshope Hall on our way from Paterdale to Ambleside.

And now for a few words upon the Church, its Monuments, and the Deceased who are spoken of as lying in the surrounding churchyard. But first for the one picture, given by the Pastor and the Wanderer, of the Living. In this nothing is introduced but what was taken from nature and real life. The cottage is called Hacket, and stands as described on the southern extremity of the ridge which separates the two Langdales: the pair who inhabited it were called Jonathan and Betty Yewdale. Once when our children were ill, of whooping-cough I think, we took them for change of air to this cottage, and were in the habit of going there to drink tea upon fine summer afternoons, so that we became intimately acquainted with the characters, habits, and lives of these good, and, let me say, in the main, wise people. The matron had, in her early youth, been a servant in a house at Hawkshead, where several boys boarded, while I was a schoolboy there. I did not remember her as having served in that capacity; but we had many little anecdotes to tell to each other of remarkable boys, incidents and adventures which had made a noise in their day in that small town. These two persons afterwards settled at Rydal, where they both died.

The church, as already noticed, is that of Grasmere. The interior of it has been improved lately — made warmer by under-drawing the roof and raising the floor — but the rude and antique majesty of its former appearance has been impaired by painting the rafters; and the oak benches, with a simple rail at the back dividing them from each other, have given way to seats that have more the appearance of pews. It is remarkable that, excepting only the pew belonging to Rydal Hall, that to Rydal Mount, the one to the Parsonage, and I believe another, the men and women still continue, as used to be the custom in Wales, to sit separate from each other. Is this practice as old as the Reformation? and when and how did it originate? In the Jewish synagogues and in Lady Huntingdon's chapels the sexes are divided in the same way. In the adjoining churchyard greater changes have taken place. It is now not a little crowded with tombstones; and near the school-house which stands in the churchyard is an ugly structure, built to receive the hearse, which is recently come into use. It would not be worth while to allude to this building or the hearse-vehicle it contains, but that the latter has been the means of introducing a change much to be lamented in the mode of conducting funerals among the mountains. Now, the coffin is lodged in the hearse at the door of the house of the deceased, and the corpse is so conveyed to the churchyard gate: all the solemnity which formerly attended its progress, as described in the poem, is put an end to. So much do I regret this, that I beg to be excused for giving utterance here to a wish that, should it befall me to die at Rydal Mount, my own body may be carried to Grasmere church after the manner in which, till lately, that of every one was borne to that place of sepulture, namely, on the shoulders of neighbours, no

house being passed without some words of a funeral psalm being sung at the time by the attendants. When I put into the mouth of the Wanderer, "Many precious rites and customs of our rural ancestry are gone or stealing from us; this I hope will last for ever," and what follows, little did I foresee that the observance and mode of proceeding, which had often affected me so much, would so soon be superseded. Having said much of the injury done to this churchyard, let me add that one is at liberty to look forward to a time when, by the growth of the yew-trees, thriving there, a solemnity will be spread over the place that will in some degree make amends for the old simple character which has already been so much encroached upon, and will be still more every year. I will here set down, more at length, what has been mentioned in a previous note, that my friend Sir George Beaumont, having long ago purchased the beautiful piece of water called Loughrigg Tarn, on the Banks of which he intended to build, I told him that a person in Kendal who was attached to the place wished to purchase it. Sir George, finding the possession of no use to him, consented to part with it, and placed the purchase-money—twenty pounds—at my disposal for any local use which I thought proper. Accordingly I resolved to plant yew-trees in the churchyard, and had four pretty strong large oak enclosures made, in each of which was planted, under my own eye, and principally if not entirely by my own hand, two young trees, with the intention of leaving the one that throve best to stand. Many years after, Mr. Barber, who will long be remembered in Grasmere; Mr. Greenwood, the chief landed proprietor; and myself, had four other enclosures made in the churchyard at our own expense, in each of which was planted a tree taken from its neighbour, and they all stand thriving admirably, the fences having been removed as no longer necessary. May the trees be taken care of hereafter when we are all gone, and some of them will perhaps at some far distant time rival in majesty the yew of Lorton and those which I have described as growing in Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage.

And now for the persons that are selected as lying in the churchyard. But first for the individual whose grave is prepared to receive him. His story is here truly related: he was a school-fellow of mine for some years. He came to us when he was at least seventeen years of age, very tall, robust, and full-grown. This prevented him from falling into the amusements and games of the school: consequently he gave more time to books. He was not remarkably bright or quick, but by industry he made a progress more than respectable. His parents not being wealthy enough to send him to college, when he left Hawkshead he became a schoolmaster, with a view to prepare himself for holy orders. About this time he fell in love as related in the poem, and everything followed as there described, except that I do not know when and where he died. The number of youths that came to Hawkshead school, from the families of the humble yeomanry, to be educated to a certain degree of scholarship as a preparation for the church, was considerable, and the fortunes of these persons in after life various of course, and of some not a little remarkable. I have now one of this class in my eye who became an usher in a preparatory school and ended in making a large fortune. His manners when he came to Hawkshead were as uncouth as well could be; but he had good abilities, with skill to turn them to account; and when the master of the school, to which he was usher, died, he stepped into his place and became proprietor of the establishment. He contrived to manage it with such address, and so much to the taste of what is called high society and the fashionable world, that no school of the kind, even till he retired, was in such high request. Ministers of state, the wealthiest gentry, and nobility of the first rank, vied with each other in bespeaking a place for their sons in the seminary of this fortunate teacher. In the solitude of Grasmere, while living as a married man in a cottage of eight pounds per annum rent, I often used to smile at the tales which reached me of his brilliant career. Not two hundred yards from the cottage in Grasmere, just mentioned, to which I retired, this gentleman, who many years afterwards purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, is now erecting a boat-house, with an upper story, to be resorted to as an entertaining-room when he and his associates may feel inclined to take their pastime on the lake. Every passenger will be disgusted with the sight of this edifice, not merely as a tasteless thing in itself, but as utterly out of place, and peculiarly fitted, as far as it is observed (and it obtrudes itself on notice at every point of view), to mar the beauty and destroy the pastoral simplicity of the vale. For my own part and that of my household it is our utter detestation, standing by a shore to which, before the highroad was made to pass that way, we used daily and hourly to repair for seclusion and for the shelter of a grove under which I composed many of my poems, the "Brothers" especially, and for this reason we gave the grove that name.

"That which each man loved  
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
Dies with him, or is changed."

So much for my old school-fellow and his exploits. I will only add that the foundation has twice failed, from the lake no doubt being intolerant of the intrusion.

The Miner, next described as having found his treasure after twice ten years of labour, lived in Paterdale, and the story is true to the letter. It seems to me, however, rather remarkable that the strength of mind which had supported him through this long unrewarded labour did not enable him to bear its successful issue. Several times in the course of my life I have heard of sudden influxes of great wealth being followed by derangement, and in one instance the shock of good fortune was so great as to produce absolute idiocy: but these all happened where there had been little or no previous effort to acquire the riches, and therefore such a consequence might the more naturally be expected than in the case of the solitary Miner. In reviewing his story, one cannot but regret that such perseverance was not sustained by a worthier object. Archimedes leapt out of his bath and ran about the streets proclaiming his discovery in a transport of joy, but we are not told that he lost either his life or his senses in consequence. The next character, to whom the Priest is led by contrast with the resoluteness displayed by the foregoing, is taken from a person born and bred in Grasmere, by name Dawson; and whose talents, disposition, and way of life were such as are here delineated. I did not know him, but all was fresh in memory when we settled at Grasmere in the beginning of the century. From this point, the conversation leads to the mention of two individuals who, by their several fortunes, were, at different times, driven to take refuge at the small and obscure town of Hawkshead on the skirt of these mountains. Their stories I had from the dear old dame with whom, as a schoolboy and afterwards, I lodged for nearly the space of ten years. The elder, the Jacobite, was named Drummmond, and was of a high family in Scotland: the Hanoverian Whig bore the name of Vandepuit, and might perhaps be a descendant of some Dutchman who had come over in the train of King William. At all events his zeal was such that he ruined himself by a contest for the representation of London or Westminster, undertaken to support his party; and retired to this corner of the world, selected, as it had been by Drummmond, for that obscurity which, since visiting the Lakes became fashionable, it has no longer retained. So much was this region considered out of the way till a late period, that persons who had fled from justice used often to resort hither for concealment; and some were so bold as to, not unfrequently, make excursions from the place of their retreat, for the purpose of committing fresh offences. Such was particularly the case with two brothers of the name of Weston who took up their abode at Old Brathay, I think about seventy years ago. They were highwaymen, and lived there some time without being discovered, though it was known that they often disappeared in a way and upon errands which could not be accounted for. Their horses were noticed as being of a choice breed, and I have heard from the Relfh family, one of whom was a saddler in the town of Kendal, that they were curious in their saddles and housings and accoutrements of their horses. They, as I have heard, and as was universally believed, were in the end both taken and hanged.

“Tall was her stature; her complexion dark  
And saturnine”

This person lived at Town-end, and was almost our next neighbour. I have little to notice concerning her beyond what is said in the poem. She was a most striking instance how far a woman may surpass in talent, in knowledge, and culture of mind, those with and among whom she lives, and yet fall below them in Christian virtues of the heart and spirit. It seemed almost, and I say it with grief, that in proportion as she excelled in the one, she failed in the other. How frequently has one to observe in both sexes the same thing, and how mortifying is the reflection!

“As, on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March.”

The story that follows was told to Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister by the sister of this unhappy young woman; and every particular was exactly as I have related. The party was not known to me, though she lived at Hawkshead, but it was after I left school. The clergyman, who administered comfort to her in her distress, I knew well. Her sister who told the story was the wife of a leading yeoman in the vale of Grasmere, and they were an affectionate pair and greatly respected by every one who knew them. Neither lived to be old; and their estate — which was perhaps the most considerable then in the vale, and was endeared to them by many remembrances of a salutary character not easily understood, or sympathised with, by those who are born to great affluence — passed to their eldest son, according to the practice of these vales, who died soon after he came into possession. He was an amiable and promising youth, but was succeeded by an only brother, a good-natured man, who fell into habits of drinking, by which he gradually reduced his property; and the other day the last acre of it was sold, and his wife and children

and he himself, still surviving, have very little left to live upon, which it would not perhaps have been worth while to record here but that, through all trials, this woman has proved a model of patience, meekness, affectionate forbearance, and forgiveness. Their eldest son, who, through the vices of his father, has thus been robbed of an ancient family inheritance, was never heard to murmur or complain against the cause of their distress, and is now (1843) deservedly the chief prop of his mother's hopes.

The clergyman and his family described at the beginning of the seventh book were, during many years, our principal associates in the vale of Grasmere, unless I were to except our very nearest neighbours. I have entered so particularly into the main points of their history, that I will barely testify in prose that — with the single exception of the particulars of their journey to Grasmere, which, however, was exactly copied from in another instance — the whole that I have said of them is as faithful to the truth as words can make it. There was much talent in the family: the eldest son was distinguished for poetical talent, of which a specimen is given in my notes to the sonnets to the Duddon. Once, when in our cottage at Town-end I was talking with him about poetry, in the course of conversation I presumed to find fault with the versification of Pope, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer: he defended him with a warmth that indicated much irritation: nevertheless I would not abandon my point, and said, "In compass and variety of sound your own versification surpasses his." Never shall I forget the change in his countenance and tone of voice: the storm was laid in a moment; he no longer disputed my judgment, and I passed immediately in his mind, no doubt, for as great a critic as ever lived. I ought to add, he was a clergyman and a well-educated man, and his verbal memory was the most remarkable of any individual I have known, except a Mr. Archer, an Irishman, who lived several years in this neighbourhood, and who, in this faculty, was a prodigy; he afterwards became deranged, and I fear continues so, if alive. Then follows the character of Robert Walker, for which see notes to the Duddon. Then that of the deaf man, whose epitaph may be seen in the churchyard at the head of Haweswater, and whose qualities of mind and heart, and their benign influence in conjunction with his privation, I had from his relatives on the spot. The blind man, next commemorated, was John Gough, of Kendal, a man known, far beyond his neighbourhood, for his talents and attainments in natural history and science. Of the Infant's grave, next noticed, I will only say, it is an exact picture of what fell under my own observation; and all persons who are intimately acquainted with cottage life must often have observed like instances of the working of the domestic affections.

"A volley thrice repeated o'er the corpse  
Let down into the hollow of that grave."

This young volunteer bore the name of Dawson, and was younger brother, if I am not mistaken, to the prodigal of whose character and fortunes an account is given towards the beginning of the preceding book. The father of the family I knew well; he was a man of literary education and of experience in society much beyond what was common among the inhabitants of the vale. He had lived a good while in the Highlands of Scotland, as a manager of iron-works at Bunaw, and had acted as clerk to one of my predecessors in the office of Distributor of Stamps, when he used to travel round the country collecting and bringing home the money due to Government, in gold, which, it may be worth while to mention for the sake of my friends, was deposited in the cell or iron closet under the west window of the long room at Rydal Mount, which still exists with the iron doors that guarded the property. This of course was before the time of Bills and Notes. The two sons of this person had no doubt been led by the knowledge of their father to take more delight in scholarship, and had been accustomed in their own minds to take a wider view of social interests than was usual among their associates. The premature death of this gallant young man was much lamented, and, as an attendant at the funeral, I myself witnessed the ceremony and the effect of it as described in the poem.

"Tradition tells  
That, in Eliza's golden days, a Knight  
Came on a war-horse."  
"The house is gone."

The pillars of the gateway in front of the mansion remained when we first took up our abode at Grasmere. Two or three cottages still remain, which are called Knott-houses from the name of the gentleman (I have called him a knight) concerning whom these traditions survive. He was the ancestor of the Knott family, formerly considerable proprietors in the district. What follows in the discourse of the Wanderer upon the changes he had witnessed in rural life, by the introduction of machinery, is truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth, and from what was often told me by persons of this humble calling. Happily, most hap-

pily, for these mountains, the mischief was diverted from the banks of their beautiful streams, and transferred to open and flat countries abounding in coal, where the agency of steam was found much more effectual for carrying on those demoralising works. Had it not been for this invention, long before the present time every torrent and river in this district would have had its factory, large and populous in proportion to the power of the water that could there have been commanded. Parliament has interfered to prevent the night-work which was once carried on in these mills as actively as during the daytime, and by necessity still more perniciously — a sad disgrace to the proprietors, and to the nation which could so long tolerate such unnatural proceedings. Reviewing at this late period, 1843, what I put into the mouths of my interlocutors a few years after the commencement of the century, I grieve that so little progress has been made in diminishing the evils deplored, or promoting the benefits of education which the Wanderer anticipates. The results of Lord Ashley's labours to defer the time when children might legally be allowed to work in factories, and his endeavours to limit still farther the hours of permitted labour, have fallen far short of his own humane wishes, and those of every benevolent and right-minded man who has carefully attended to this subject: and in the present session of Parliament (1843) Sir James Graham's attempt to establish a course of religious education among the children employed in factories has been abandoned, in consequence of what might easily have been foreseen, the vehement and turbulent opposition of the Dissenters. so that, for many years to come, it may be thought expedient to leave the religious instruction of children entirely in the hands of the several denominations of Christians in the island, each body to work according to its own means and in its own way. Such is my own confidence, a confidence I share with many others of my most valued friends, in the superior advantages, both religious and social, which attend a course of instruction presided over and guided by the clergy of the Church of England, that I have no doubt that, if but once its members, lay and clerical, were duly sensible of those benefits, their church would daily gain ground, and rapidly, upon every shape and fashion of Dissent: and in that case, a great majority in Parliament being sensible of these benefits, the Ministers of the country might be emboldened, were it necessary, to apply funds of the State to the support of education on Church principles. Before I conclude, I cannot forbear noticing the strenuous efforts made at this time in Parliament, by so many persons, to extend manufacturing and commercial industry at the expense of agricultural, though we have recently had abundant proofs that the apprehensions expressed by the Wanderer were not groundless.

"I spake of mischief by the wise diffused  
With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads  
The healthier, the securer, we become --  
Delusion which a moment may destroy!"

The Chartists are well aware of this possibility, and cling to it with an ardour and perseverance which nothing but wiser and more brotherly dealing towards the many, on the part of the wealthy few, can moderate or remove.

"While, from the grassy mountain's open side,  
We gazed, in silence hushed."

The point here fixed upon in my imagination is half-way up the northern side of Loughrigg Fell, from which the Pastor and his companions were supposed to look upwards to the sky and mountain-tops, and round the vale, with the lake lying immediately beneath them.

"But turned not without welcome promise made,  
That he would share the pleasures and pursuits  
Of yet another summer's day, consumed  
In wandering with us."

When I reported this promise of the Solitary, and long after, it was my wish, and I might say intention, that we should resume our wanderings, and pass the Borders into his native country, where, as I hoped, he might witness, in the society of the Wanderer, some religious ceremony — a sacrament, say, in the open fields, or a preaching among the mountains — which, by recalling to his mind the days of his early childhood, when he had been present on such occasions in company with his parents and nearest kindred, might have dissolved his heart into tenderness, and so have done more towards restoring the Christian faith in which he had been educated, and, with that, contentedness and even cheerfulness of mind, than all that the Wanderer and Pastor, by their several effusions and addresses, had been able to effect. An issue like this was in my intentions. But, alas!

"Mid the wreck of is and was,  
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic glass  
Than noblest objects utterly decayed!"

TO THE RIGHT HON.  
WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K. G.

ETC. ETC.

OFF, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer !  
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent ;  
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,  
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.  
— Now, by thy care befriended, I appear  
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,  
A token (may it prove a monument !)  
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.  
Gladly would I have waited till my task  
Had reached its close ; but Life is insecure,  
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream :  
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask  
Thy favour : trusting that thou wilt not deem  
The offering, though imperfect, prenture.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
July 23, 1814.

#### PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1814

THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem ; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts. — The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first ; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem ; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which "The Excursion" is a part, derives its Title of "The Recluse." — Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished ; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing

views of Man, Nature, and Society ; and to be entitled, "The Recluse" ; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement. — The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself ; and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen. — Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of "The Recluse" will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person ; and that in the intermediate part ("The Excursion") the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system ; it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course ; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the meantime the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of "The Recluse," may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

[See "The Recluse," page 231, lines 754-860, for the *Prospectus*.]

#### BOOK FIRST

##### THE WANDERER

##### ARGUMENT

A summer forenoon — The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of

whose education and course of life he gives an account — The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

'T WAS summer, and the sun had mounted high:

Southward the landscape indistinctly glared  
Through a pale steam; but all the northern downs,

In clearest air ascending, showed far off  
A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung  
From brooding clouds; shadows that lay in spots

Determined and unmoved, with steady beams

Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed;  
To him most pleasant who on soft cool moss

Extends his careless limbs along the front

Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts

A twilight of its own, an ample shade,  
Where the wren warbles, while the dreaming man,

Half conscious of the soothing melody,  
With side-long eye looks out upon the scene,

By power of that impending covert, thrown  
To finer distance. Mine was at that hour  
Far other lot, yet with good hope that soon  
Under a shade as grateful I should find  
Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier joy.

Across a bare wide Common I was toiling  
With languid steps that by the slippery turf

Were baffled; nor could my weak arm disperse

The host of insects gathering round my face,

And ever with me as I paced along.

Upon that open moorland stood a grove,  
The wished-for port to which my course was bound.

Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom  
Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,  
Appeared a roofless Hut; four naked walls  
That stared upon each other! — I looked round,

And to my wish and to my hope espied  
The Friend I sought; a Man of reverend age,

But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.  
There was he seen upon the cottage-bench,  
Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep;  
An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before — alone

And stationed in the public way, with face  
Turned toward the sun then setting, while that staff

Afforded, to the figure of the man  
Detained for contemplation or repose,  
Graceful support; his countenance as he stood

Was hidden from my view, and he remained

Unrecognised; but, stricken by the sight,  
With slackened footsteps I advanced, and soon

A glad congratulation we exchanged  
At such unthought-of meeting. — For the night

We parted, nothing willingly; and now  
He by appointment waited for me here, 50  
Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends: amid a pleasant vale,

In the antique market-village where was passed

My school-time, an apartment he had owned,

To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,  
And found a kind of home or harbour there.

He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys  
Singled out me, as he in sport would say,  
For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years.

As I grew up, it was my best delight 60  
To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,  
On holidays, we rambled through the woods:

We sate — we walked; he pleased me with report

Of things which he had seen; and often touched

Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind  
Turned inward; or at my request would sing

Old songs, the product of his native hills;  
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,  
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed  
As cool refreshing water, by the care 70  
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused



Through a parched meadow-ground, in  
time of drought.  
Still deeper welcome found his pure dis-  
course;  
How precious, when in riper days I learned  
To weigh with care his words, and to re-  
joice  
In the plain presence of his dignity !

Oh ! many are the Poets that are sown  
By Nature; men endowed with highest  
gifts,

The vision and the faculty divine; <sup>79</sup>  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,  
(Which, in the docile season of their youth,  
It was denied them to acquire, through  
lack

Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,  
Or haply by a temper too severe,  
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame)  
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led  
By circumstance to take unto the height  
The measure of themselves, these favoured  
Beings,

All but a scattered few, live out their time,  
Husbanding that which they possess within,  
And go to the grave, unthought of. Strong-  
est minds <sup>91</sup>

Are often those of whom the noisy world  
Hears least; else surely this Man had not  
left

His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.  
But, as the mind was filled with inward  
light,

So not without distinction had he lived,  
Beloved and honoured — far as he was  
known.

And some small portion of his eloquent  
speech,  
And something that may serve to set in  
view

The feeling pleasures of his loneliness, <sup>100</sup>  
His observations, and the thoughts his  
mind

Had dealt with — I will here record in verse;  
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink  
Or rise as venerable Nature leads,  
The high and tender Muses shall accept  
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,  
And listening Time reward with sacred  
praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born;  
Where, on a small hereditary farm,  
An unproductive slip of rugged ground, <sup>110</sup>

His Parents, with their numerous offspring,  
dwelt;

A virtuous household, though exceeding  
poor !

Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,  
And fearing God; the very children taught  
Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's  
word,

And an habitual piety, maintained  
With strictness scarcely known on English  
ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I  
speak,

In summer, tended cattle on the hills;  
But, through the inclement and the perilous  
days <sup>120</sup>

Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,  
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that  
stood

Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,  
Remote from view of city spire, or sound  
Of minster clock ! From that bleak tene-  
ment

He, many an evening, to his distant home  
In solitude returning, saw the hills  
Grow larger in the darkness; all alone  
Beheld the stars come out above his head,  
And travelled through the wood, with no  
one near <sup>130</sup>

To whom he might confess the things he  
saw.

So the foundations of his mind were laid.  
In such communion, not from terror free,  
While yet a child, and long before his time,  
Had he perceived the presence and the  
power

Of greatness; and deep feelings had im-  
pressed

So vividly great objects that they lay  
Upon his mind like substances, whose  
presence

Perplexed the bodily sense. He had re-  
ceived

A precious gift; for, as he grew in years,  
With these impressions would he still  
compare <sup>141</sup>

All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes,  
and forms;

And, being still unsatisfied with aught  
Of dimmer character, he thence attained  
An active power to fasten images  
Upon his brain; and on their pictured lines  
Intensely brooded, even till they acquired

The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,  
While yet a child, with a child's eagerness  
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye <sup>150</sup>  
On all things which the moving seasons  
brought

To feed such appetite — nor this alone  
Appeased his yearning: — in the after-day  
Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,  
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked  
crag

He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,  
Or from the power of a peculiar eye,  
Or by creative feeling overborne,  
Or by predominance of thought oppressed,  
Even in their fixed and steady lineaments  
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind, <sup>161</sup>  
Expression ever varying !

Thus informed,  
He had small need of books; for many a  
tale

Traditional, round the mountains hung,  
And many a legend, peopling the dark  
woods,

Nourished Imagination in her growth,  
And gave the Mind that apprehensive  
power

By which she is made quick to recognise  
The moral properties and scope of things.  
But eagerly he read, and read again, <sup>170</sup>  
Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied;  
The life and death of martyrs, who sus-  
tained,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs  
Triumphantly displayed in records left  
Of persecution, and the Covenant — times  
Whose echo rings through Scotland to this  
hour !

And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved  
A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,  
That left half-told the preternatural tale,  
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends, <sup>180</sup>  
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts  
Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures  
dire,

Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-  
ankled too,

With long and ghostly shanks — forms which  
once seen

Could never be forgotten !

In his heart,  
Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant,  
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love  
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,  
Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
Or flowing from the universal face <sup>190</sup>

Of earth and sky. But he had felt the  
power

Of Nature, and already was prepared,  
By his intense conceptions, to receive  
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,  
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has  
taught

To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy — but for the growing  
Youth

What soul was his, when, from the naked  
top

Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He  
looked — <sup>200</sup>

Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him: — Far and wide the clouds  
were touched,

And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank  
The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him; they swallowed up  
His animal being; in them did he live, <sup>209</sup>  
And by them did he live; they were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no  
request;

Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
That made him; it was blessedness and  
love !

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain  
tops, <sup>219</sup>

Such intercourse was his, and in this sort  
Was his existence oftentimes possessed.  
O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared  
The written promise ! Early had he learned  
To reverence the volume that displays  
The mystery, the life which cannot die;  
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.  
All things, responsive to the writing, there  
Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
And greatness still revolving; infinite: <sup>229</sup>  
There littleness was not; the least of things  
Seemed infinite; and there his spirit shaped  
Her prospects, nor did he believe, — he *saw*.  
What wonder if his being thus became  
Sublime and comprehensive ! Low desires,

Low thoughts had there no place; yet was  
his heart

Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,  
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,  
And whence they flowed; and from them  
he acquired

Wisdom, which works through patience;  
thence he learned

In oft-recurring hours of sober thought <sup>240</sup>  
To look on Nature with a humble heart.  
Self-questioned where it did not understand,  
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time; yet to the nearest  
town

He duly went with what small overplus  
His earnings might supply, and brought  
away

The book that most had tempted his desires  
While at the stall he read. Among the hills  
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,  
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,  
The annual savings of a toilsome life, <sup>251</sup>  
His Schoolmaster supplied; books that ex-  
plain

The purer elements of truth involved  
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,  
(Especially perceived where nature droops  
And feeling is suppressed) preserve the  
mind

Busy in solitude and poverty.  
These occupations oftentimes deceived  
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,  
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf  
In pensive idleness. What could he do, <sup>261</sup>  
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,  
With blind endeavours? Yet, still upper-  
most,

Nature was at his heart as if he felt,  
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting  
power

In all things that from her sweet influence  
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with  
her hues,

Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,  
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.  
While yet he lingered in the rudiments <sup>270</sup>  
Of science, and among her simplest laws,  
His triangles — they were the stars of  
heaven,

The silent stars! Oft did he take delight  
To measure the altitude of some tall crag  
That is the eagle's birth-place, or some  
peak

Familiar with forgotten years, that shows,

Inscribed upon its visionary sides,  
The history of many a winter storm,  
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year was  
told, <sup>280</sup>

Accumulated feelings pressed his heart  
With still increasing weight; he was o'er-  
powered

By Nature; by the turbulence subdued  
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,  
And the first virgin passion of a soul  
Communing with the glorious universe.  
Full often wished he that the winds might  
rage

When they were silent: far more fondly  
now

Than in his earlier season did he love  
Tempestuous nights — the conflict and the  
sounds <sup>290</sup>

That live in darkness. From his intellect  
And from the stillness of abstracted thought  
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win  
The peace required, he scanned the laws of  
light

Amid the roar of torrents, where they send  
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air  
A cloud of mist that, smitten by the sun,  
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,  
And vainly by all other means, he strove  
To mitigate the fever of his heart. <sup>300</sup>

In dreams, in study, and in ardent  
thought,

Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist  
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,  
And every moral feeling of his soul  
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in  
content

The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,  
And drinking from the well of homely life.  
— But, from past liberty, and tried re-  
straints,

He now was summoned to select the course  
Of humble industry that promised best <sup>310</sup>  
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.  
Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach  
A village-school — but wandering thoughts  
were then

A misery to him; and the Youth resigned  
A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who con-  
strains

The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,

The free-born Swiss to leave his narrow  
 vales,  
 (Spirit attached to regions mountainous  
 Like their own stedfast clouds) did now  
 impel<sup>320</sup>  
 His restless mind to look abroad with hope.  
 — An irksome drudgery seems it to plod  
 on,  
 Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting  
 storm,  
 A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load,  
 Bent as he moves, and needing frequent  
 rest;  
 Yet do such travellers find their own de-  
 light;  
 And their hard service, deemed debasing  
 now,  
 Gained merited respect in simpler times;  
 When squire, and priest, and they who  
 round them dwelt  
 In rustic sequestration all dependent<sup>330</sup>  
 Upon the PEDLAR'S toil — supplied their  
 wants,  
 Or pleased their fancies, with the wares he  
 brought.  
 Not ignorant was the Youth that still no  
 few  
 Of his adventurous countrymen were led  
 By perseverance in this track of life  
 To competence and ease: — to him it offered  
 Attractions manifold; — and this he chose.  
 — His Parents on the enterprise bestowed  
 Their farewell benediction, but with hearts  
 Foreboding evil. From his native hills<sup>340</sup>  
 He wandered far; much did he see of men,  
 Their manners, their enjoyments, and pur-  
 suits,  
 Their passions and their feelings; chiefly  
 those  
 Essential and eternal in the heart,  
 That, mid the simpler forms of rural life,  
 Exist more simple in their elements,  
 And speak a plainer language. In the  
 woods,  
 A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,  
 Itinerant in this labour, he had passed<sup>349</sup>  
 The better portion of his time; and there  
 Spontaneously had his affections thriven  
 Amid the bounties of the year, the peace  
 And liberty of nature; there he kept  
 In solitude and solitary thought  
 His mind in a just equipoise of love.  
 Serene it was, unclouded by the cares  
 Of ordinary life; unvexed, unwarped  
 By partial bondage. In his steady course,

No piteous revolutions had he felt,  
 No wild varieties of joy and grief.<sup>360</sup>  
 Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,  
 His heart lay open; and, by nature tuned  
 And constant disposition of his thoughts  
 To sympathy with man, he was alive  
 To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,  
 And all that was endured; for, in himself  
 Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,  
 He had no painful pressure from without  
 That made him turn aside from wretched-  
 ness  
 With coward fears. He could afford to  
 suffer<sup>370</sup>  
 With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it  
 came  
 That in our best experience he was rich,  
 And in the wisdom of our daily life.  
 For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,  
 He had observed the progress and decay  
 Of many minds, of minds and bodies too;  
 The history of many families;  
 How they had prospered; how they were  
 o'erthrown  
 By passion or mischance, or such misrule<sup>374</sup>  
 Among the unthinking masters of the earth  
 As makes the nations groan.  
 This active course  
 He followed till provision for his wants  
 Had been obtained; — the Wanderer then  
 resolved  
 To pass the remnant of his days, untasked  
 With needless services, from hardship free.  
 His calling laid aside, he lived at ease:  
 But still he loved to pace the public roads  
 And the wild paths; and, by the summer's  
 warmth  
 Invited, often would he leave his home  
 And journey far, revisiting the scenes<sup>390</sup>  
 That to his memory were most endeared.  
 — Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits,  
 undamped  
 By worldly-mindedness or anxious care;  
 Observant, studious, thoughtful, and re-  
 freshed  
 By knowledge gathered up from day to  
 day;  
 Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.  
 The Scottish Church, both on himself and  
 those  
 With whom from childhood he grew up,  
 had held  
 The strong hand of her purity; and still  
 Had watched him with an unrelenting eye.

This he remembered in his riper age <sup>401</sup>  
 With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.  
 But by the native vigour of his mind,  
 By his habitual wanderings out of doors,  
 By loneliness, and goodness, and kind  
     works,  
 Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,  
 He had imbibed of fear or darker thought  
 Was melted all away; so true was this,  
 That sometimes his religion seemed to me  
 Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods;  
 Who to the model of his own pure heart <sup>411</sup>  
 Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,  
 And human reason dictated with awe.  
 — And surely never did there live on earth  
 A man of kindlier nature. The rough  
     sports  
 And teasing ways of children vexed not  
     him;  
 Indulgent listener was he to the tongue  
 Of garrulous age; nor did the sick man's  
     tale,  
 To his fraternal sympathy addressed, <sup>419</sup>  
 Obtain reluctant hearing. Plain his garb;  
 Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared  
 For sabbath duties; yet he was a man  
 Whom no one could have passed without  
     remark.  
 Active and nervous was his gait; his limbs  
 And his whole figure breathed intelligence.  
 Time had compressed the freshness of his  
     cheek  
 Into a narrower circle of deep red,  
 But had not tamed his eye; that, under  
     brows  
 Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it  
     brought  
 From years of youth; which, like a Being  
     made <sup>430</sup>  
 Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill  
 To blend with knowledge of the years to  
     come,  
 Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed; and such his course  
     of life

Who now, with no appendage but a staff,  
 The prized memorial of relinquished toils,  
 Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,  
 Screened from the sun. Supine the Wan-  
     derer lay,  
 His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,  
 The shadows of the breezy elms above <sup>440</sup>

Dappling his face. He had not heard the  
     sound  
 Of my approaching steps, and in the shade  
 Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' space.  
 At length I hailed him, seeing that his hat  
 Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim  
 Had newly scooped a running stream. He  
     rose,  
 And ere our lively greeting into peace  
 Had settled, "T is," said I, "a burning  
     day:  
 My lips are parched with thirst, but you, it  
     seems  
 Have somewhere found relief." He, at the  
     word, <sup>450</sup>  
 Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me  
     climb  
 The fence where that aspiring shrub looked  
     out  
 Upon the public way. It was a plot  
 Of garden ground run wild, its matted  
     weeds  
 Marked with the steps of those, whom, as  
     they passed,  
 The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank  
     slips,  
 Or currants, hanging from their leafless  
     stems,  
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap  
 The broken wall. I looked around, and  
     there,  
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder  
     boughs <sup>460</sup>  
 Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well  
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy  
     fern.  
 My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerless  
     spot  
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade re-  
     turned  
 Where sate the old Man on the cottage-  
     bench;  
 And, while, beside him, with uncovered  
     head,  
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,  
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,  
 Thus did he speak. "I see around me  
     here  
 Things which you cannot see: we die, my  
     Friend, <sup>470</sup>  
 Nor we alone, but that which each man  
     loved  
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
 Dies with him, or is changed; and very  
     soon

Even of the good is no memorial left.  
 — The Poets, in their elegies and songs  
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,  
 They call upon the hills and streams, to  
 mourn,  
 And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they  
 speak,  
 In these their invocations, with a voice  
 Obedient to the strong creative power 480  
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are  
 More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred  
 birth,  
 That steal upon the meditative mind,  
 And grow with thought. Beside you spring  
 I stood,  
 And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel  
 One sadness, they and I. For them a  
 bond  
 Of brotherhood is broken: time has been  
 When, every day, the touch of human hand  
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them  
 up  
 In mortal stillness; and they ministered 490  
 To human comfort. Stooping down to  
 drink,  
 Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied  
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,  
 Green with the moss of years, and subject  
 only  
 To the soft handling of the elements:  
 There let it lie — how foolish are such  
 thoughts!  
 Forgive them; — never — never did my  
 steps  
 Approach this door but she who dwelt  
 within  
 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved  
 her  
 As my own child. Oh, Sir! the good die  
 first, 500  
 And they whose hearts are dry as sum-  
 mer dust  
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger  
 Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle  
 looks,  
 When she upheld the cool refreshment  
 drawn  
 From that forsaken spring; and no one  
 came  
 But he was welcome; no one went away  
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is  
 dead,  
 The light extinguished of her lonely hut,  
 The hut itself abandoned to decay,  
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave. 510

I speak," continued he, "of One whose  
 stock  
 Of virtues bloomed beneath this lonely  
 roof.  
 She was a Woman of a steady mind,  
 Tender and deep in her excess of love;  
 Not speaking much, pleased rather with  
 the joy  
 Of her own thoughts: by some especial care  
 Her temper had been framed, as if to make  
 A Being, who by adding love to peace  
 Might live on earth a life of happiness.  
 Her wedded Partner lacked not on his  
 side 520  
 The humble worth that satisfied her heart:  
 Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal  
 Keenly industrious. She with pride would  
 tell  
 That he was often seated at his loom,  
 In summer, ere the mower was abroad  
 Among the dewy grass, — in early spring,  
 Ere the last star had vanished. — They  
 who passed  
 At evening, from behind the garden fence  
 Might hear his busy spade, which he would  
 ply,  
 After his daily work, until the light 530  
 Had failed, and every leaf and flower were  
 lost  
 In the dark hedges. So their days were  
 spent  
 In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy  
 Was their best hope, next to the God in  
 heaven.

Not twenty years ago, but you I think  
 Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there  
 came  
 Two blighting seasons, when the fields were  
 left  
 With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to  
 add  
 A worse affliction in the plague of war:  
 This happy Land was stricken to the  
 heart! 540  
 A Wanderer then among the cottages,  
 I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw  
 The hardships of that season: many rich  
 Sank down, as in a dream, among the  
 poor;  
 And of the poor did many cease to be,  
 And their place knew them not. Mean-  
 while, abridged  
 Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled  
 To numerous self-denials, Margaret

Went struggling on through those calamitous years

With cheerful hope, until the second autumn, 550

When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,

Smitten with perilous fever. In disease He lingered long; and, when his strength returned,

He found the little he had stored, to meet The hour of accident or crippling age, Was all consumed. A second infant now Was added to the troubles of a time Laden, for them and all of their degree, With care and sorrow; shoals of artisans From ill-requited labour turned adrift 560 Sought daily bread from public charity, They, and their wives and children — happier far

Could they have lived as do the little birds That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite

That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks!

A sad reverse it was for him who long Had filled with plenty, and possessed in peace,

This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood, And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes That had no mirth in them; or with his knife 570

Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks —

Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook

In house or garden, any casual work Of use or ornament; and with a strange, Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty, He mingled, where he might, the various tasks

Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring. But this endured not; his good humour soon

Became a weight in which no pleasure was: And poverty brought on a petted mood 580 And a sore temper: day by day he drooped, And he would leave his work — and to the town

Would turn without an errand his slack steps;

Or wander here and there among the fields. One while he would speak lightly of his babes,

And with a cruel tongue: at other times

He tossed them with a false unnatural joy: And 't was a rueful thing to see the looks Of the poor innocent children. 'Every smile,'

Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees, 590

'Made my heart bleed.'"

At this the Wanderer paused; And, looking up to those enormous elms, He said, " 'T is now the hour of deepest noon.

At this still season of repose and peace, This hour when all things which are not at rest

Are cheerful; while this multitude of flies With tuneful hum is filling all the air; Why should a tear be on an old Man's cheek?

Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,

And in the weakness of humanity, 600 From natural wisdom turn our hearts away; To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears; And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb The calm of nature with our restless thoughts?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone: But, when he ended, there was in his face Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild, That for a little time it stole away All recollection; and that simple tale Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound. 610

A while on trivial things we held discourse, To me soon tasteless. In my own despite, I thought of that poor Woman as of one Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed

Her homely tale with such familiar power, With such an active countenance, an eye So busy, that the things of which he spake Seemed present; and, attention now relaxed,

A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins; I rose; and, having left the breezy shade, Stood drinking comfort from the warmer sun, 621

That had not cheered me long — ere, looking round

Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned, And begged of the old Man that, for my sake,

He would resume his story.

He replied,  
 "It were a wantonness, and would demand  
 Severe reproof, if we were men whose  
 hearts  
 Could hold vain dalliance with the misery  
 Even of the dead; contented thence to  
 draw  
 A momentary pleasure, never marked 630  
 By reason, barren of all future good.  
 But we have known that there is often  
 found  
 In mournful thoughts, and always might  
 be found,  
 A power to virtue friendly; were 't not so,  
 I am a dreamer among men, indeed  
 An idle dreamer! 'T is a common tale,  
 An ordinary sorrow of man's life,  
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed  
 In bodily form. — But without further  
 bidding 639  
 I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,  
 To whom this cottage, till those hapless  
 years,  
 Had been a blessed home, it was my chance  
 To travel in a country far remote;  
 And when these lofty elms once more ap-  
 peared,  
 What pleasant expectations lured me on  
 O'er the flat Common! — With quick step  
 I reached  
 The threshold, lifted with light hand the  
 latch;  
 But, when I entered, Margaret looked at  
 me  
 A little while; then turned her head away  
 Speechless, — and, sitting down upon a  
 chair, 650  
 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,  
 Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch!  
 at last  
 She rose from off her seat, and then, — O  
 Sir!  
 I cannot tell how she pronounced my  
 name: —  
 With fervent love, and with a face of grief  
 Unutterably helpless, and a look  
 That seemed to cling upon me, she en-  
 quired  
 If I had seen her husband. As she spake  
 A strange surprise and fear came to my  
 heart,  
 Nor had I power to answer ere she told 660  
 That he had disappeared — not two months  
 gone.

He left his house: two wretched days had  
 past,  
 And on the third, as wistfully she raised  
 Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,  
 Like one in trouble, for returning light,  
 Within her chamber-casement she espied  
 A folded paper, lying as if placed  
 To meet her waking eyes. This trem-  
 blingly  
 She opened — found no writing, but beheld  
 Pieces of money carefully enclosed, 670  
 Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the  
 sight,'  
 Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand  
 That must have placed it there; and ere  
 that day  
 Was ended, that long anxious day, I  
 learned,  
 From one who by my husband had been  
 sent  
 With the sad news, that he had joined a  
 troop  
 Of soldiers, going to a distant land.  
 — He left me thus — he could not gather  
 heart  
 To take a farewell of me; for he feared  
 That I should follow with my babes, and  
 sink 680  
 Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

This tale did Margaret tell with many  
 tears:  
 And, when she ended, I had little power  
 To give her comfort, and was glad to take  
 Such words of hope from her own mouth  
 as served  
 To cheer us both. But long we had not  
 talked  
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,  
 And with a brighter eye she looked around  
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.  
 We parted. — 'T was the time of early  
 spring; 690  
 I left her busy with her garden tools;  
 And well remember, o'er that fence she  
 looked,  
 And, while I paced along the foot-way path,  
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,  
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice  
 That seemed the very sound of happy  
 thoughts.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,  
 With my accustomed load; in heat and  
 cold,



Through many a wood and many an open  
ground, <sup>699</sup>

In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,  
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might be-  
fall;

My best companions now the driving winds,  
And now the 'trotting brooks' and whis-  
pering trees,

And now the music of my own sad steps,  
With many a short-lived thought that  
passed between,

And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,  
When, in the warmth of midsummer, the  
wheat

Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass,  
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field  
spread

Its tender verdure. At the door arrived, <sup>710</sup>  
I found that she was absent. In the shade,  
Where now we sit, I waited her return.

Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore  
Its customary look, — only, it seemed,  
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,  
Hung down in heavier tufts; and that  
bright weed,

The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take  
root

Along the window's edge, profusely grew,  
Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,  
And strolled into her garden. It appeared  
To lag behind the season, and had lost <sup>721</sup>  
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and  
thrift

Had broken their trim border-lines, and  
straggled

O'er paths they used to deck: carnations,  
once

Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less  
For the peculiar pains they had required,  
Declined their languid heads, wanting  
support.

The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths  
and bells,

Had twined about her two small rows of  
peas,

And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour  
Was wasted. — Back I turned my restless  
steps; <sup>731</sup>

A stranger passed; and, guessing whom I  
sought,

He said that she was used to ramble far. —  
The sun was sinking in the west; and  
now

I sate with sad impatience. From within  
Her solitary infant cried aloud;

Then, like a blast that dies away self-  
stilled,

The voice was silent. From the bench I  
rose;

But neither could divert nor soothe my  
thoughts.

The spot, though fair, was very desolate —  
The longer I remained, more desolate: <sup>741</sup>

And, looking round me, now I first observed  
The corner stones, on either side the porch,  
With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck  
o'er

With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the  
sheep,

That fed upon the Common, thither came  
Familiarly, and found a couching-place  
Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows  
fell

From these tall elms; the cottage-clock  
struck eight; —

I turned, and saw her distant a few steps.  
Her face was pale and thin — her figure,  
too, <sup>751</sup>

Was changed. As she unlocked the door,  
she said,

'It grieves me you have waited here so  
long,

But, in good truth, I've wandered much of  
late;

And sometimes — to my shame I speak —  
have need

Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'  
While on the board she spread our evening  
meal,

She told me — interrupting not the work  
Which gave employment to her listless  
hands —

That she had parted with her elder child,  
To a kind master on a distant farm <sup>761</sup>  
Now happily apprenticed. — 'I perceive  
You look at me, and you have cause; to-  
day

I have been travelling far; and many days  
About the fields I wander, knowing this  
Only, that what I seek I cannot find;

And so I waste my time: for I am changed;  
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much  
wrong

And to this helpless infant. I have slept  
Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my  
tears <sup>770</sup>

Have flowed as if my body were not such  
As others are; and I could never die.

But I am now in mind and in my heart  
More easy; and I hope,' said she, 'that  
God

Will give me patience to endure the things  
Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved  
Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel  
The story linger in my heart; I fear  
'T is long and tedious; but my spirit clings  
To that poor Woman: — so familiarly <sup>780</sup>  
Do I perceive her manner, and her look,  
And presence; and so deeply do I feel  
Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my  
walks

A momentary trance comes over me;  
And to myself I seem to muse on One  
By sorrow laid asleep; or borne away,  
A human being destined to awake  
To human life, or something very near  
To human life, when he shall come again  
For whom she suffered. Yes, it would  
have grieved <sup>790</sup>

Your very soul to see her: evermore  
Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward  
were cast;

And, when she at her table gave me food,  
She did not look at me. Her voice was  
low,

Her body was subdued. In every act  
Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared  
The careless stillness of a thinking mind  
Self-occupied; to which all outward things  
Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,  
But yet no motion of the breast was seen,  
No heaving of the heart. While by the  
fire <sup>801</sup>

We sate together, sighs came on my ear,  
I knew not how, and hardly whence they  
came.

Ere my departure, to her care I gave,  
For her son's use, some tokens of regard;  
Which with a look of welcome she received;  
And I exhorted her to place her trust  
In God's good love, and seek his help by  
prayer.

I took my staff, and, when I kissed her  
babe,  
The tears stood in her eyes. I left her  
then <sup>810</sup>

With the best hope and comfort I could  
give:

She thanked me for my wish; — but for  
my hope

It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,  
And took my rounds along this road again  
When on its sunny bank the primrose  
flower

Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the  
Spring.

I found her sad and drooping: she had  
learned

No tidings of her husband; if he lived,  
She knew not that he lived; if he were  
dead,

She knew not he was dead. She seemed  
the same <sup>820</sup>

In person and appearance; but her house  
Bespoke a sleepy hand of negligence;  
The floor was neither dry nor neat, the  
hearth

Was comfortless, and her small lot of  
books,

Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore  
Had been piled up against the corner  
panes

In seemly order, now, with straggling  
leaves

Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,  
As they had chanced to fall. Her infant  
Babe

Had from his Mother caught the trick of  
grief, <sup>830</sup>

And sighed among its playthings. I with-  
drew,

And once again entering the garden saw,  
More plainly still, that poverty and grief  
Were now come nearer to her: weeds de-  
faced

The hardened soil, and knots of withered  
grass:

No ridges there appeared of clear black  
mould,

No winter greenness; of her herbs and  
flowers,

It seemed the better part was gnawed away  
Or trampled into earth; a chain of straw,  
Which had been twined about the slender  
stem <sup>840</sup>

Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root;  
The bark was nibbled round by truant  
sheep.

— Margaret stood near, her infant in her  
arms,

And, noting that my eye was on the tree,  
She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone  
Ere Robert come again.' When to the  
House

We had returned together, she enquired

If I had any hope: — but for her babe  
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,  
 She had no wish to live, that she must die  
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom <sup>851</sup>  
 Still in its place; his Sunday garments  
 hung  
 Upon the self-same nail; his very staff  
 Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,  
 In bleak December, I retraced this way,  
 She told me that her little babe was dead,  
 And she was left alone. She now, released  
 From her maternal cares, had taken up  
 The employment common through these  
 wilds, and gained,  
 By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself;  
 And for this end had hired a neighbour's  
 boy <sup>861</sup>  
 To give her needful help. That very  
 time

Most willingly she put her work aside,  
 And walked with me along the miry road,  
 Heedless how far; and, in such piteous  
 sort

That any heart had ached to hear her,  
 begged

That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask  
 For him whom she had lost. We parted  
 then —

Our final parting; for from that time forth  
 Did many seasons pass ere I returned <sup>870</sup>  
 Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years;  
 From their first separation, nine long years,  
 She lingered in unquiet widowhood;  
 A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have  
 been

A sore heart-wasting! I have heard, my  
 Friend,

That in yon harbour oftentimes she sate  
 Alone, through half the vacant sabbath  
 day;

And, if a dog passed by, she still would  
 quit

The shade, and look abroad. On this old  
 bench <sup>879</sup>

For hours she sate; and evermore her eye  
 Was busy in the distance, shaping things  
 That made her heart beat quick. You see  
 that path,

Now faint, — the grass has crept o'er its  
 grey line;

There, to and fro, she paced through many  
 a day

Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp

That girt her waist, spinning the long-  
 drawn thread

With backward steps. Yet ever as there  
 passed

A man whose garments showed the soldier's  
 red,

Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,  
 The little child who sate to turn the wheel  
 Ceased from his task; and she with falter-  
 ing voice <sup>891</sup>

Made many a fond enquiry; and when they,  
 Whose presence gave no comfort, were  
 gone by,

Her heart was still more sad. And by yon  
 gate,

That bars the traveller's road, she often  
 stood,

And when a stranger horseman came, the  
 latch

Would lift, and in his face look wistfully;  
 Most happy, if, from aught discovered  
 there

Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat  
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her  
 poor Hut <sup>900</sup>

Sank to decay; for he was gone, whose  
 hand,

At the first nipping of October frost,  
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands  
 of straw

Chequered the green-grown thatch. And  
 so she lived

Through the long winter, reckless and  
 alone;

Until her house by frost, and thaw, and  
 rain,

Was sapped; and while she slept, the  
 nightly damps

Did chill her breast; and in the stormy  
 day

Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the  
 wind,

Even at the side of her own fire. Yet  
 still <sup>910</sup>

She loved this wretched spot, nor would for  
 worlds

Have parted hence; and still that length of  
 road,

And this rude bench, one torturing hope  
 endeared,

Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my  
 Friend, —

In sickness she remained; and here she  
 died;

Last human tenant of these ruined walls!"

The old Man ceased: he saw that I was moved;

From that low bench, rising instinctively  
I turned aside in weakness, nor had power  
To thank him for the tale which he had told. <sup>920</sup>

I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall  
Reviewed that Woman's sufferings; and it seemed

To comfort me while with a brother's love  
I blessed her in the impotence of grief.  
Then towards the cottage I returned; and traced

Fondly, though with an interest more mild,  
That secret spirit of humanity  
Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies  
Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,

And silent overgrowings, still survived. <sup>930</sup>  
The old Man, noting this, resumed, and said,

"My Friend! enough to sorrow you have given,

The purposes of wisdom ask no more:  
Nor more would she have craved as due to One

Who, in her worst distress, had ofttimes felt

The unbounded might of prayer; and learned, with soul

Fixed on the Cross, that consolation springs,  
From sources deeper far than deepest pain,  
For the meek Sufferer. Why then should we read

The forms of things with an unworthy eye?  
She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here. <sup>941</sup>

I well remember that those very plumes,  
Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,

By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,  
As once I passed, into my heart conveyed  
So still an image of tranquillity,  
So calm and still, and looked so beautiful  
Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,

That what we feel of sorrow and despair  
From ruin and from change, and all the grief <sup>950</sup>

That passing shows of Being leave behind,  
Appeared an idle dream, that could maintain,

Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened spirit

Whose meditative sympathies repose

Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away,  
And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot

A slant and mellow radiance, which began  
To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,  
We sate on that low bench: and now we felt, <sup>960</sup>

Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming on.

A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,  
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,  
At distance heard, peopled the milder air.  
The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly mien

Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff;  
Together casting then a farewell look  
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade;  
And, ere the stars were visible, had reached  
A village-inn, — our evening resting-place.

## BOOK SECOND

### THE SOLITARY

#### ARGUMENT

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated — Morning scene, and View of a Village Wake — Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he purposes to visit — View, from an eminence, of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for his retreat — Sound of singing from below — A funeral procession — Descent into the Valley — Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the Valley — Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary — Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district — Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage — The cottage entered — Description of the Solitary's apartment — Repast there — View, from the window, of two mountain summits; and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him — Account of the departed inmate of the cottage — Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind — Leave the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared  
The Minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,  
Baronial court or royal; cheered with gifts

Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;  
Now meeting on his road an armed knight,  
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side  
Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's  
roof

One evening sumptuously lodged; the next,  
Humbly in a religious hospital;  
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;  
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell. 11  
Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;  
He walked—protected from the sword of  
war

By virtue of that sacred instrument  
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side;  
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went,  
Opening from land to land an easy way  
By melody, and by the charm of verse.  
Yet not the noblest of that honoured Race  
Drew happier, loftier, more empassioned,  
thoughts 20

From his long journeyings and eventful life,  
Than this obscure Itinerant had skill  
To gather, ranging through the tamer  
ground

Of these our unimaginative days;  
Both while he trod the earth in humblest  
guise  
Accoutred with his burthen and his staff;  
And now, when free to move with lighter  
pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite  
school  
Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural  
lanes,  
Looked on this guide with reverential love?  
Each with the other pleased, we now pur-  
sued 31

Our journey, under favourable skies.  
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light  
Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,  
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him  
Remembrances; or from his tongue call  
forth

Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard  
Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,  
Which nature's various objects might in-  
spire;

And in the silence of his face I read 40  
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,  
And the mute fish that glances in the stream,  
And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,  
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,  
The fowl domestic, and the household dog—  
In his capacious mind, he loved them all:

Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.  
Oft was occasion given me to perceive  
How the calm pleasures of the pasturing  
herd

To happy contemplation soothed his walk;  
How the poor brute's condition, forced to  
run 51

Its course of suffering in the public road,  
Sad contrast! all too often smote his heart  
With unavailing pity. Rich in love  
And sweet humanity, he was, himself,  
To the degree that he desired, beloved.  
Smiles of good-will from faces that he knew  
Greeted us all day long; we took our seats  
By many a cottage-hearth, where he re-  
ceived

The welcome of an Innmate from afar, 60  
And I at once forgot, I was a Stranger.  
—Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,  
Huts where his charity was blest; his voice  
Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.  
And, sometimes—where the poor man held  
dispute

With his own mind, unable to subdue  
Impatience through inaptness to perceive  
General distress in his particular lot;  
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain  
Struggling against it; with a soul perplexed,  
And finding in herself no steady power 71  
To draw the line of comfort that divides  
Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,  
From the injustice of our brother men—  
To him appeal was made as to a judge;  
Who, with an understanding heart, allayed  
The perturbation; listened to the plea;  
Resolved the dubious point; and sentence  
gave

So grounded, so applied, that it was heard  
With softened spirit, even when it con-  
demned. 80

Such intercourse I witnessed, while we  
roved,  
Now as his choice directed, now as mine;  
Or both, with equal readiness of will,  
Our course submitting to the changeable  
breeze

Of accident. But when the rising sun  
Had three times called us to renew our walk,  
My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,  
As if the thought were but a moment old,  
Claimed absolute dominion for the day.  
We started—and he led me toward the  
hills, 90  
Up through an ample vale, with higher hills

Before us, mountains stern and desolate;  
But, in the majesty of distance, now  
Set off, and to our ken appearing fair  
Of aspect, with ærial softness clad,  
And beautified with morning's purple beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress  
Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their  
time,

May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs  
Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise  
From earth the dust of morning, slow to  
rise;

And they, if blest with health and hearts at  
ease,

Shall lack not their enjoyment: — but how  
faint

Compared with ours! who, pacing side by  
side,

Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all  
That we beheld; and lend the listening  
sense

To every grateful sound of earth and air;  
Pausing at will — our spirits braced, our  
thoughts

Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,  
And pure as dew bathing their crimson  
leaves.

Mount slowly, sun! that we may journey  
long,

By this dark hill protected from thy beams!  
Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent  
wish;

But quickly from among our morning  
thoughts

'T was chased away: for, toward the west-  
ern side

Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,  
We saw a throng of people; wherefore met?  
Bliethe notes of music, suddenly let loose  
On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising, yield  
Prompt answer; they proclaim the annual  
Wake,

Which the bright season favours. — Tabor  
and pipe

In purpose join to hasten or reprove  
The laggard Rustie; and repay with boons  
Of merriment a party-coloured knot,  
Already formed upon the village-green.

— Beyond the limits of the shadow cast  
By the broad hill, glistened upon our sight  
That gay assemblage. Round them and  
above,

Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,

Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of  
trees

Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver  
steam

Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs  
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a  
mast

Of gold, the Maypole shines; as if the rays  
Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,  
With gladsome influence could re-animate  
The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly  
scene

Invite us; shall we quit our road, and join  
These festive matins?" — He replied, "Not  
loth

To linger I would here with you partake,  
Not one hour merely, but till evening's  
close,

The simple pastimes of the day and place.  
By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,  
The turf of yon large pasture will be  
skimmed;

There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall con-  
tend:

But know we not that he, who intermits  
The appointed task and duties of the day,  
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day;  
(Checking the finer spirits that refuse

To flow when purposes are lightly changed?  
A length of journey yet remains untraced:  
Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his  
staff

Raised toward those craggy summits, his  
intent

He thus imparted: —

"In a spot that lies  
Among yon mountain fastnesses concealed,  
You will receive, before the hour of noon,  
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil,  
From sight of One who lives secluded there,  
Lonesome and lost: of whom, and whose  
past life,

(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be  
More faithfully collected from himself)  
This brief communication shall suffice.

Though now sojourning there, he, like  
myself,

Sprung from a stock of lowly parentage  
Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract  
Where many a sheltered and well-tended  
plant,

Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,

Blossoms of piety and innocence. 169  
Such grateful promises his youth displayed:  
And, having shown in study forward zeal,  
He to the Ministry was duly called;  
And straight, incited by a curious mind  
Filled with vague hopes, he undertook the  
charge

Of Chaplain to a military troop  
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they  
marched

In plaided vest, — his fellow-countrymen.  
This office filling, yet by native power  
And force of native inclination made  
An intellectual ruler in the haunts 180  
Of social vanity, he walked the world,  
Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety;  
Lax, buoyant — less a pastor with his flock  
Than a soldier among soldiers — lived and  
roamed

Where Fortune led: — and Fortune, who  
oft proves

The careless wanderer's friend, to him  
made known

A blooming Lady — a conspicuous flower,  
Admired for beauty, for her sweetness  
praised;

Whom he had sensibility to love,  
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win. 190

For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts of  
mind,

Nor sparingly endowed with worldly wealth,  
His office he relinquished; and retired  
From the world's notice to a rural home.  
Youth's season yet with him was scarcely  
past,

And she was in youth's prime. How free  
their love,

How full their joy! 'Till, pitiable doom!  
In the short course of one undreaded year  
Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'er-  
threw

Two lovely Children — all that they pos-  
sessed! 200

The Mother followed: — miserably bare  
The one Survivor stood; he wept, he  
prayed

For his dismissal, day and night, compelled  
To hold communion with the grave, and  
face

With pain the regions of eternity.  
An uncomplaining apathy displaced  
This anguish; and, indifferent to delight,  
To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,  
To private interest dead, and public care. 209

So lived he; so he might have died.

But now,  
To the wide world's astonishment, appeared  
A glorious opening, the unlooked-for dawn,  
That promised everlasting joy to France!  
Her voice of social transport reached even  
him!

He broke from his contracted bounds, re-  
paired

To the great City, an emporium then  
Of golden expectations, and receiving  
Freights every day from a new world of  
hope.

Thither his popular talents he transferred;  
And, from the pulpit, zealously main-  
tained 220

The cause of Christ and civil liberty,  
As one, and moving to one glorious end.  
Intoxicating service! I might say  
A happy service; for he was sincere  
As vanity and fondness for applause,  
And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.

That righteous cause (such power hath  
freedom) bound,

For one hostility, in friendly league,  
Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves;  
Was served by rival advocates that came 230  
From regions opposite as heaven and hell.  
One courage seemed to animate them all:  
And, from the dazzling conquests daily  
gained

By their united efforts, there arose  
A proud and most presumptuous confidence  
In the transcendent wisdom of the age,  
And her discernment; not alone in rights,  
And in the origin and bounds of power  
Social and temporal; but in laws divine,  
Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed. 240  
An overweening trust was raised; and fear  
Cast out, alike of person and of thing.  
Plague from this union spread, whose sub-  
tle bane

The strongest did not easily escape;  
And He, what wonder! took a mortal  
taint.

How shall I trace the change, how bear to  
tell

That he broke faith with them whom he  
had laid

In earth's dark chambers, with a Christian's  
hope!

An infidel contempt of holy writ 249  
Stole by degrees upon his mind; and hence  
Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced;

Vilest hypocrisy — the laughing, gay  
Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but pride.  
Smooth words he had to wheedle simple  
souls;

But, for disciples of the inner school,  
Old freedom was old servitude, and they  
The wisest whose opinions stooped the  
least

To known restraints; and who most boldly  
drew

Hopeful prognostications from a creed,  
That, in the light of false philosophy, <sup>260</sup>  
Spread like a halo round a misty moon,  
Widening its circle as the storms advance.

His sacred function was at length re-  
nounced;

And every day and every place enjoyed  
The unshackled layman's natural liberty;  
Speech, manners, morals, all without dis-  
guise.

I do not wish to wrong him; though the  
course

Of private life licentiously displayed  
Unhallowed actions — planted like a crown  
Upon the insolent aspiring brow <sup>270</sup>  
Of spurious notions — worn as open signs  
Of prejudice subdued — still he retained,  
'Mid much abasement, what he had received  
From nature, an intense and glowing mind.  
Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew  
weak,

And mortal sickness on her face appeared,  
He coloured objects to his own desire  
As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods  
Of pain were keen as those of better men,  
Nay keener, as his fortitude was less: <sup>280</sup>  
And he continued, when worse days were  
come,

To deal about his sparkling eloquence,  
Struggling against the strange reverse with  
zeal

That showed like happiness. But, in de-  
spite

Of all this outside bravery, within,  
He neither felt encouragement nor hope:  
For moral dignity, and strength of mind,  
Were wanting; and simplicity of life;  
And reverence for himself; and, last and  
best,

Confiding thoughts, through love and fear  
of Him <sup>290</sup>

Before whose sight the troubles of this  
world  
Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

The glory of the times fading away —  
The splendour, which had given a festal air  
To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled  
From his own sight — this gone, he for-  
feited

All joy in human nature; was consumed,  
And vexed, and chafed, by levity and  
scorn,

And fruitless indignation; galled by pride;  
Made desperate by contempt of men who  
throve <sup>300</sup>

Before his sight in power or fame, and won,  
Without desert, what he desired; weak  
men,

Too weak even for his envy or his hate!  
Tormented thus, after a wandering course  
Of discontent, and inwardly oppress  
With malady — in part, I fear, provoked  
By weariness of life — he fixed his home,  
Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,  
Among these rugged hills; where now he  
dwells,

And wastes the sad remainder of his hours,  
Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that  
wants not <sup>311</sup>

Its own voluptuousness; — on this resolved,  
With this content, that he will live and die  
Forgotten, — at safe distance from 'a world  
Not moving to his mind.'"

These serious words

Closed the preparatory notices  
That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile  
The way, while we advanced up that wide  
vale.

Diverging now (as if his quest had been  
Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall  
Of water, or some lofty eminence, <sup>321</sup>  
Renowned for splendid prospect far and  
wide)

We scaled, without a track to ease our  
steps,

A steep ascent; and reached a dreary plain,  
With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops  
Before us; savage region! which I paced  
Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!  
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,  
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high  
Among the mountains; even as if the spot  
Had been from eldest time by wish of  
theirs <sup>331</sup>

So placed, to be shut out from all the  
world!

Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;  
With rocks encompassed, save that to the  
south



Was one small opening, where a heath-clad  
ridge

Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close;  
A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,  
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more !  
It seemed the home of poverty and toil, <sup>340</sup>  
Though not of want: the little fields, made  
green

By husbandry of many thrifty years,  
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland  
house.

— There crows the cock, single in his  
domain:

The small birds find in spring no thicket  
there

To shroud them; only from the neighbour-  
ing vales

The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,  
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder  
place.

Ah ! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is  
here ! <sup>349</sup>

Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease  
Upon a bed of heath; — full many a spot  
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy  
Among the mountains; never one like this;  
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure;  
Not melancholy — no, for it is green,  
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself  
With the few needful things that life re-  
quires.

— In rugged arms how softly does it lie,  
How tenderly protected ! Far and near  
We have an image of the pristine earth,  
The planet in its nakedness: were this <sup>361</sup>  
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,  
First, last, and single, in the breathing  
world,

It could not be more quiet; peace is here  
Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale  
Of public news or private; years that pass  
Forgetfully; uncalled upon to pay  
The common penalties of mortal life,  
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent I  
lay <sup>370</sup>

In silence musing by my Comrade's side,  
He also silent; when from out the heart  
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,  
Or several voices in one solemn sound,  
Was heard ascending; mournful, deep, and  
slow

The cadence, as of psalms — a funeral  
dirge !

We listened, looking down upon the hut,  
But seeing no one: meanwhile from below  
The strain continued, spiritual as before;  
And now distinctly could I recognise <sup>380</sup>  
These words: — “ *Shall in the grave thy  
love be known,*

*In death thy faithfulness ?* ” — “ God rest  
his soul ! ”

Said the old man, abruptly breaking si-  
lence, —

“ He is departed, and finds peace at last ! ”

This scarcely spoken, and those holy  
strains

Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a band  
Of rustic persons, from behind the hut  
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which  
They shaped their course along the sloping  
side

Of that small valley, singing as they moved;  
A sober company and few, the men <sup>391</sup>

Bare-headed, and all decently attired !  
Some steps when they had thus advanced,  
the dirge

Ended; and, from the stillness that ensued  
Recovering, to my Friend I said, “ You  
spake,

Methought, with apprehension that these  
rites

Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat  
This day we purposed to intrude.” — “ I did  
so,

But let us hence, that we may learn the  
truth:

Perhaps it is not he but some one else <sup>400</sup>  
For whom this pious service is performed;  
Some other tenant of the solitude.”

So, to a steep and difficult descent  
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to  
crag,

Where passage could be won; and, as the  
last

Of the mute train, behind the heathy top  
Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,  
I, more impatient in my downward course,  
Had landed upon easy ground; and there  
Stood waiting for my Comrade. When  
behold <sup>410</sup>

An object that enticed my steps aside !  
A narrow, winding entry opened out  
Into a platform — that lay, sheepfold-wise,  
Enclosed between an upright mass of rock

And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool  
recess,  
And fanciful! For where the rock and  
wall

Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed  
By thrusting two rude staves into the wall  
And overlaying them with mountain sods;  
To weather-fend a little turf-built seat <sup>420</sup>  
Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor  
dread

The burning sunshine, or a transient shower;  
But the whole plainly wrought by children's  
hands!

Whose skill had thronged the floor with a  
proud show

Of baly-houses, curiously arranged;  
Nor wanting ornament of walks between,  
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,  
And gardens interposed. Pleased with the  
sight,

I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,  
Who, entering, round him threw a careless  
glance, <sup>430</sup>

Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,  
"Lo! what is here?" and, stooping down,  
drew forth

A book, that, in the midst of stones and  
moss

And wreck of party-coloured earthen-ware,  
Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise  
One of those petty structures. "His it  
must be!"

Exclaimed the Wanderer, "cannot but be  
his,

And he is gone!" The book, which in my  
hand

Had opened of itself (for it was swoln  
With searching damp, and seemingly had  
lain <sup>440</sup>

To the injurious elements exposed  
From week to week,) I found to be a  
work

In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,  
His famous Optimist. "Unhappy Man!"

Exclaimed my Friend: "here then has been  
to him

Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place  
Within how deep a shelter! He had fits,  
Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,  
And loved the haunts of children: here, no  
doubt,

Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple  
sports, <sup>450</sup>

Or sate companionless; and here the book,  
Left and forgotten in his careless way,

Must by the cottage-children have been  
found:

Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate  
work!

To what odd purpose have the darlings  
turned

This sad memorial of their hapless friend!"

"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise, to  
find

Such book in such a place!"—"A book it  
is,"

He answered, "to the Person suited well,  
Though little suited to surrounding things:  
'Tis strange, I grant; and stranger still had  
been <sup>461</sup>

To see the Man who owned it, dwelling  
here,

With one poor shepherd, far from all the  
world!—

Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,  
As from these intimations I forebode,

Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than  
yours,

And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old Man's  
hand;

And he continued, glancing on the leaves  
An eye of scorn:—"The lover," said he,  
"doomed <sup>470</sup>

To love when hope hath failed him—whom  
no depth

Of privacy is deep enough to hide,  
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,  
And that is joy to him. When change of  
times

Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but  
give

The faithful servant, who must hide his  
head

Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,  
A kerchief sprinkled with his master's  
blood,

And he too hath his comforter. How poor,  
Beyond all poverty how destitute, <sup>480</sup>

Must that Man have been left, who, hither  
driven,

Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him  
No dearer relique, and no better stay,

Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,  
Impure conceits discharging from a heart

Hardened by impious pride!—I did not fear  
To tax you with this journey;"—mildly  
said

My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped  
 Into the presence of the cheerful light —  
 "For I have knowledge that you do not  
     shrink 490  
 From moving spectacles; — but let us on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the word  
 I followed, till he made a sudden stand:  
 For full in view, approaching through a  
     gate

That opened from the enclosure of green  
     fields

Into the rough uncultivated ground,  
 Behold the Man whom he had fancied dead!  
 I knew from his deportment, mien, and  
     dress,

That it could be no other; a pale face,  
 A meagre person, tall, and in a garb 500  
 Not rustic — dull and faded like himself!  
 He saw us not, though distant but few  
     steps;

For he was busy, dealing, from a store  
 Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings  
 Of red ripe currants; gift by which he  
     strove,

With intermixture of endearing words,  
 To soothe a Child, who walked beside him,  
     weeping

As if disconsolate. — "They to the grave  
 Are bearing him, my Little-one," he said,  
 "To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain;  
 His body is at rest, his soul in heaven." 511

More might have followed — but my  
     honoured Friend

Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank  
 And cordial greeting. — Vivid was the light  
 That flashed and sparkled from the other's  
     eyes;

He was all fire: no shadow on his brow  
 Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.  
 Hands joined he with his Visitant, — a grasp,  
 An eager grasp; and many moments'  
     space —

When the first glow of pleasure was no  
     more, 520

And, of the sad appearance which at once  
 Had vanished, much was come and  
     coming back —

An amicable smile retained the life  
 Which it had unexpectedly received,  
 Upon his hollow cheek. "How kind," he  
     said,

"Nor could your coming have been better  
     timed;

For this, you see, is in our narrow world  
 A day of sorrow. I have here a charge" —  
 And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly  
 The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping  
     child — 530

"A little mourner, whom it is my task  
 To comfort; — but how came ye? — if yon  
     track

(Which doth at once befriend us and be-  
     tray)

Conducted hither your most welcome feet,  
 Ye could not miss the funeral train — they  
     yet

Have scarcely disappeared." "This bloom-  
     ing Child,"

Said the old Man, "is of an age to weep  
 At any grave or solemn spectacle,  
 Truly distressed or overpowered with awe,  
 He knows not wherefore; — but the boy to-  
     day,

Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears; you  
     also

Must have sustained a loss." — "The hand  
     of Death,"

He answered, "has been here; but could  
     not well

Have fallen more lightly, if it had not fallen  
 Upon myself." — The other left these words  
 Unnoticed, thus continuing —

"From yon crag,  
 Down whose steep sides we dropped into  
     the vale,

We heard the hymn they sang — a solemn  
     sound

Heard anywhere; but in a place like this  
 'Tis more than human! Many precious rites

And customs of our rural ancestry 551  
 Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,

Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I  
 Stood still, though but a casual passenger,  
 So much I felt the awfulness of life,  
 In that one moment when the corse is  
     lifted

In silence, with a hush of decency;  
 Then from the threshold moves with song  
     of peace,

And confidential yearnings, towards its  
     home,

Its final home on earth. What traveller —  
     who — 560

(How far so'er a stranger) does not own  
 The bond of brotherhood, when he sees  
     them go,

A mute procession on the houseless road;  
 Or passing by some single tenement

Or clustered dwellings, where again they  
raise

The monitory voice ? But most of all  
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,  
Then, when the body, soon to be consigned  
Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,  
Is raised from the church-aisle, and forward  
borne 570

Upon the shoulders of the next in love,  
The nearest in affection or in blood;  
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt  
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid  
In silent grief their unuplifted heads,  
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's  
mournful plaint,

And that most awful scripture which de-  
clares

We shall not sleep, but we shall all be  
changed !

— Have I not seen — ye likewise may have  
seen —

Son, husband, brothers — brothers side by  
side, 580

And son and father also side by side,  
Rise from that posture: — and in concert  
move,

On the green turf following the vested  
Priest,

Four dear supporters of one senseless  
weight,

From which they do not shrink, and under  
which

They faint not, but advance towards the  
open grave

Step after step — together, with their firm  
Unhidden faces: he that suffers most,  
He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,  
The most serene, with most undaunted  
eye ! — 590

Oh ! blest are they who live and die like  
these,

Loved with such love, and with such  
sorrow mourned ! ”

“That poor Man taken hence to-day,”  
replied

The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile  
Which did not please me, “must be  
deemed, I fear,

Of the unblest; for he will surely sink  
Into his mother earth without such pomp  
Of grief, depart without occasion given  
By him for such array of fortitude.

Full seventy winters hath he lived, and  
mark ! 600

This simple Child will mourn his one short  
hour,

And I shall miss him: scanty tribute ! yet,  
This wanting, he would leave the sight of  
men,

If love were his sole claim upon their care,  
Like a ripe date which in the desert falls  
Without a hand to gather it.”

At this  
I interposed, though loth to speak, and  
said,

“Can it be thus among so small a band  
As ye must needs be here ? in such a place  
I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight  
Of a departing cloud.” — “T was not for  
love” — 611

Answered the sick Man with a careless  
voice —

“That I came hither; neither have I found  
Among associates who have power of speech,  
Nor in such other converse as is here,  
Temptation so prevailing as to change  
That mood, or undermine my first resolve.”  
Then, speaking in like careless sort, he  
said

To my benign Companion, — “Pity ’t is  
That fortune did not guide you to this  
house 620

A few days earlier; then would you have  
seen

What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,  
That seems by Nature hollowed out to be  
The seat and bosom of pure innocence,  
Are made of; an ungracious matter this !  
Which, for truth's sake, yet in remem-  
brance too

Of past discussions with this zealous friend  
And advocate of humble life, I now

Will force upon his notice; undeterred  
By the example of his own pure course, 630  
And that respect and deference which a  
soul

May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched  
In what she most doth value, love of God  
And his frail creature Man; — but ye shall  
hear.

I talk — and ye are standing in the sun  
Without refreshment ! ”

Quickly had he spoken,  
And, with light steps still quicker than his  
words,

Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the  
spot;

And, to my feeling, ere we reached the  
door,

Had almost a forbidding nakedness; 640  
 Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair,  
 Than it appeared when from the beetling  
 rock

We had looked down upon it. All within,  
 As left by the departed company,  
 Was silent; save the solitary clock  
 That on mine ear ticked with a mournful  
 sound. —

Following our Guide we clomb the cottage-  
 stairs

And reached a small apartment dark and  
 low,

Which was no sooner entered than our Host  
 Said gaily, "This is my domain, my cell, 650  
 My hermitage, my cabin, what you will —  
 I love it better than a snail his house.  
 But now ye shall be feasted with our best."

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl  
 Left one day mistress of her mother's  
 stores,

He went about his hospitable task.  
 My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no  
 less,

And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired  
 Friend,

As if to thank him; he returned that look,  
 Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What a  
 wreck 660

Had we about us! scattered was the floor,  
 And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and  
 shelf,

With books, maps, fossils, withered plants  
 and flowers,

And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic  
 tools

Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some  
 Scribbled with verse: a broken angling-  
 rod

And shattered telescope, together linked  
 By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook;  
 And instruments of music, some half-made,  
 Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the  
 walls. 670

But speedily the promise was fulfilled;  
 A feast before us, and a courteous Host  
 Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.

A napkin, white as foam of that rough  
 brook

By which it had been bleached, o'erspread  
 the board;

And was itself half-covered with a store  
 Of dainties, — oaten bread, curd, cheese,  
 and cream;

And cakes of butter curiously embossed,  
 Butter that had imbibed from meadow-  
 flowers

A golden hue, delicate as their own 680  
 Faintly reflected in a lingering stream.

Nor lacked, for more delight on that warm  
 day,

Our table, small parade of garden fruits,  
 And whortle-berries from the mountain  
 side.

The Child, who long ere this had stilled  
 his sobs,

Was now a help to his late comforter,  
 And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid,  
 Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,  
 While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate  
 Fronting the window of that little cell, 690  
 I could not, ever and anon, forbear  
 To glance an upward look on two huge

Peaks

That from some other vale peered into this.  
 "Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host,

"if here  
 It were your lot to dwell, would soon be-  
 come

Your prized companions. — Many are the  
 notes

Which, in his tuneful course, the wind  
 draws forth

From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and  
 dashing shores;

And well those lofty brethren bear their  
 part

In the wild concert — chiefly when the  
 storm 700

Rides high; then all the upper air they fill  
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,

Like smoke, along the level of the blast,  
 In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song

Of stream and headlong flood that seldom  
 fails;

And, in the grim and breathless hour of  
 noon,

Methinks that I have heard them echo back  
 The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's  
 laws

Left them ungifted with a power to yield  
 Music of finer tone; a harmony, 710

So do I call it, though it be the hand  
 Of silence, though there be no voice; — the  
 clouds,

The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,  
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither —

touch,

And have an answer — thither come, and shape

A language not unwelcome to sick hearts  
And idle spirits: — there the sun himself,  
At the calm close of summer's longest day,  
Rests his substantial orb; — between those heights

And on the top of either pinnacle, <sup>720</sup>  
More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,

Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.  
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man  
Than the mute agents stirring there: — alone

Here do I sit and watch — ”

A fall of voice,  
Regretted like the nightingale's last note,  
Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain  
of rapture

Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer said:

“Now for the tale with which you threatened us !”

“In truth the threat escaped me unawares:  
Should the tale tire you, let this challenge stand <sup>731</sup>

For my excuse. Dissevered from mankind,  
As to your eyes and thoughts we must have seemed

When ye looked down upon us from the crag,

Islanders mid a stormy mountain sea,  
We are not so; — perpetually we touch  
Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world;  
And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day  
Relinquished, lived dependent for his bread  
Upon the laws of public charity. <sup>741</sup>

The Housewife, tempted by such slender gains

As might from that occasion be distilled,  
Opened, as she before had done for me,  
Her doors to admit this homeless Pensioner;

The portion gave of coarse but wholesome fare

Which appetite required — a blind dull nook,

Such as she had, the kennel of his rest !  
This, in itself not ill, would yet have been  
Ill borne in earlier life; but his was now  
The still contentedness of seventy years.  
Calm did he sit under the wide-spread tree <sup>751</sup>

Of his old age: and yet less calm and meek,

Winningly meek or venerably calm,  
Than slow and torpid; paying in this wise  
A penalty, if penalty it were,  
For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.  
I loved the old Man, for I pitied him !  
A task it was, I own, to hold discourse  
With one so slow in gathering up his thoughts,

But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes;  
Mild, inoffensive, ready in his way, <sup>761</sup>  
And helpful to his utmost power: and there  
Our housewife knew full well what she possessed !

He was her vassal of all labour, tilled  
Her garden, from the pasture fetched her kine;

And, one among the orderly array  
Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun  
Maintained his place; or heedfully pursued

His course, on errands bound, to other vales,

Leading sometimes an inexperienced child  
Too young for any profitable task. <sup>771</sup>

So moved he like a shadow that performed  
Substantial service. Mark me now, and learn

For what reward ! — The moon her monthly round

Hath not completed since our dame, the queen

Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,  
Into my little sanctuary rushed —  
Voice to a rueful treble humanized,  
And features in deplorable dismay.

I treat the matter lightly, but, alas ! <sup>780</sup>

It is most serious: persevering rain  
Had fallen in torrents; all the mountain tops

Were hidden, and black vapours coursed  
their sides;

This had I seen, and saw; but, till she spake,

Was wholly ignorant that my ancient Friend —

Who at her bidding, early and alone,  
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf  
For winter fuel — to his noontide meal  
Returned not, and now, haply, on the heights

Lay at the mercy of this raging storm. <sup>790</sup>  
‘Inhuman !’ — said I, ‘was an old Man’s life

Not worth the trouble of a thought ? — alas !

This notice comes too late.' With joy I saw  
Her husband enter — from a distant vale.  
We sallied forth together; found the tools  
Which the neglected veteran had dropped,  
But through all quarters looked for him in  
vain.

We shouted — but no answer ! Darkness  
fell

Without remission of the blast or shower,  
And fears for our own safety drove us  
home. 500

I, who weep little, did, I will confess,  
The moment I was seated here alone,  
Honour my little cell with some few tears  
Which anger and resentment could not dry.  
All night the storm endured; and, soon as  
help

Had been collected from the neighbouring  
vale,

With morning we renewed our quest: the  
wind

Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills  
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist; 800  
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain:  
Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass  
A heap of ruin — almost without walls  
And wholly without roof (the bleached re-  
mains

Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,  
The peasants of these lonely valleys used  
To meet for worship on that central  
height) —

We there espied the object of our search,  
Lying full three parts buried among tufts  
Of heath-plant, under and above him  
strewn,

To baffle, as he might, the watery storm:  
And there we found him breathing peace-  
ably, 821

Snug as a child that hides itself in sport  
'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.  
We spake — he made reply, but would not  
stir

At our entreaty; less from want of power  
Than apprehension and bewildering  
thoughts.

So was he lifted gently from the ground,  
And with their freight homeward the  
shepherds moved

Through the dull mist, I following — when  
a step,

A single step, that freed me from the skirts  
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view 831

Glory beyond all glory ever seen  
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !  
The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,  
Was of a mighty city — boldly say  
A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,  
Far sinking into splendour — without end !  
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,  
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high 841  
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,  
In avenues disposed; there, towers begirt  
With battlements that on their restless  
fronts

Bore stars — illumination of all gems !  
By earthly nature had the effect been  
wrought

Upon the dark materials of the storm  
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves  
And mountain-steeps and summits, where-  
unto

The vapours had receded, taking there 850  
Their station under a cerulean sky.

Oh, 't was an unimaginable sight !  
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and  
emerald turf,

Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire  
sky,

Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,  
Molten together, and composing thus,  
Each lost in each, that marvellous array  
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge  
Fantastic pomp of structure without name,  
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped. 860  
Right in the midst, where interspace ap-  
peared

Of open court, an object like a throne  
Under a shining canopy of state  
Stood fixed; and fixed resemblances were  
seen

To implements of ordinary use,  
But vast in size, in substance glorified;  
Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld  
In vision — forms uncouth of mightiest  
power

For admiration and mysterious awe. 869  
This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,  
Lay low beneath my feet; 't was visible —  
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.

That which I saw was the revealed abode  
Of Spirits in beatitude: my heart  
Swelled in my breast — 'I have been dead,'

I cried,  
'And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore do I  
live ?'

And with that pang I prayed to be no more ! —

— But I forget our Charge, as utterly I then forgot him: — there I stood and gazed:

The apparition faded not away, 880  
And I descended.

Having reached the house,  
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,  
And in serene possession of himself,  
Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed met

By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam,  
Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.  
Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly

Was glad to find her conscience set at ease;  
And not less glad, for sake of her good name,

That the poor Sufferer had escaped with life. 890

But, though he seemed at first to have received

No harm, and uncomplaining as before  
Went through his usual tasks, a silent change

Soon showed itself: he lingered three short weeks;

And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.

So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am  
That it is ended." At these words he turned —

And, with blithe air of open fellowship,  
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,

Like one who would be merry. Seeing this, 900

My grey-haired Friend said courteously —  
"Nay, nay,

You have regaled us as a hermit ought;  
Now let us forth into the sun!" — Our Host

Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

### BOOK THIRD

#### DESPONDENCY

##### ARGUMENT

Images in the Valley — Another Recess in it entered and described — Wanderer's sensations — Solitary's excited by the same objects

— Contrast between these — Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved — Conversation exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length — His domestic felicity — Afflictions — Dejection — Roused by the French Revolution — Disappointment and disgust — Voyage to America — Disappointment and disgust pursue him — His return — His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind.

A HUMMING BEE — a little tinkling rill —  
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,  
In clamorous agitation, round the crest  
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel —

By each and all of these the pensive ear  
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,  
When through the cottage-threshold we had passed,

And, deep within that lonesome valley,  
stood

Once more beneath the concave of a blue  
And cloudless sky. — Anon exclaimed our Host — 10

Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt  
The shade of discontent which on his brow  
Had gathered, — "Ye have left my cell, —  
but see

How Nature hems you in with friendly arms!

And by her help ye are my prisoners still.  
But which way shall I lead you? — how contrive,

In spot so parsimoniously endowed,  
That the brief hours, which yet remain,  
may reap

Some recompense of knowledge or delight?"

So saying, round he looked, as if perplexed; 20

And, to remove those doubts, my grey-haired Friend

Said — "Shall we take this pathway for our guide? —

Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,  
Its line had first been fashioned by the flock

Seeking a place of refuge at the root  
Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded boughs

Darken the silver bosom of the crag,  
From which she draws her meagre sustenance.

There in commodious shelter may we rest.



Or let us trace this streamlet to its  
 source; 30  
 Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,  
 And a few steps may bring us to the spot  
 Where, haply, crowned with flowerets and  
 green herbs,  
 The mountain infant to the sun comes  
 forth,  
 Like human life from darkness."—A quick  
 turn  
 Through a strait passage of encumbered  
 ground,  
 Proved that such hope was vain:— for now  
 we stood  
 Shut out from prospect of the open vale,  
 And saw the water, that composed this  
 rill,  
 Descending, disembodied, and diffused 40  
 O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,  
 Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.  
 All further progress here was barred;—  
 And who,  
 Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,  
 Here would not linger, willingly de-  
 tained ?  
 Whether to such wild objects he were led  
 When copious rains have magnified the  
 stream  
 Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,  
 Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground, 50  
 The hidden nook discovered to our view  
 A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay  
 Right at the foot of that moist precipice,  
 A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that  
 rests  
 Fearless of winds and waves. Three  
 several stones  
 Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike  
 To monumental pillars: and, from these  
 Some little space disjoined a pair were  
 seen,  
 That with united shoulders bore aloft  
 A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth:  
 Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared 61  
 A tall and shining holly, that had found  
 A hospitable chink, and stood upright,  
 As if inserted by some human hand  
 In mockery, to wither in the sun,  
 Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,  
 The first that entered. But no breeze did  
 now  
 Find entrance;— high or low appeared no  
 trace

Of motion, save the water that descended,  
 Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,  
 And softly creeping, like a breath of air, 71  
 Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,  
 To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

"Behold a cabinet for sages built,  
 Which kings might envy!"—Praise to  
 this effect

Broke from the happy old Man's reverend  
 lip;

Who to the Solitary turned, and said,  
 "In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,  
 You have decied the wealth which is your  
 own.

Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I  
 see 80

More than the heedless impress that be-  
 longs

To lonely nature's casual work: they bear  
 A semblance strange of power intelligent,  
 And of design not wholly worn away.

Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,  
 How gracefully that slender shrub looks  
 forth

From its fantastic birth-place! And I own,  
 Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,  
 That in these shows a chronicle survives  
 Of purposes akin to those of Man, 90  
 But wrought with mightier arm than now  
 prevails.

-- Voiceless the stream descends into the  
 gulf

With timid lapse;— and lo! while in this  
 strait

I stand—the chasm of sky above my head  
 Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain  
 For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,  
 Or to pass through; but rather an abyss  
 In which the everlasting stars abide;  
 And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth,  
 might tempt

The curious eye to look for them by day. 100  
 —Hail Contemplation! from the stately  
 towers,

Reared by the industrious hand of human  
 art

To lift thee high above the misty air  
 And turbulence of murmuring cities vast;  
 From academic groves, that have for thee  
 Been planted, hither come and find a lodge  
 To which thou mayst resort for holier  
 peace,—

From whose calm centre thou, through  
 height or depth,

Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead;  
Measuring through all degrees, until the  
scale 110  
Of time and conscious nature disappear,  
Lost in unsearchable eternity !”

A pause ensued; and with minuter care  
We scanned the various features of the  
scene:

And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale  
With courteous voice thus spake —

“ I should have grieved  
Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,  
If from my poor retirement ye had gone  
Leaving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,  
Your unexpected presence had so roused 120  
My spirits, that they were bent on enter-  
prise;

And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,  
Or, shall I say ? — disdained, the game that  
lurks

At my own door. The shapes before our  
eyes

And their arrangement, doubtless must be  
deemed

The sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance  
Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.  
And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn  
stone,

From Fancy, willing to set off her stores  
By sounding titles, hath acquired the name  
Of Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style 131  
My Theban obelisk; and, there, behold  
A Druid cromlech ! — thus I entertain  
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased  
To skim along the surfaces of things,  
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.  
But if the spirit be oppressed by sense  
Of instability, revolt, decay,  
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of  
Nature

And her blind helper Chance, do *then*  
suffice 140

To quicken, and to aggravate — to feed  
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,  
Not less than that huge Pile (from some  
abyss

Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)  
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks  
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round  
and round

Eddying within its vast circumference,  
On Sarum's naked plain — than pyramid  
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved —  
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high 150

Above the sandy desert, in the light  
Of sun or moon. — Forgive me, if I say  
That an appearance which hath raised your  
minds

To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause  
Different effect producing) is for me  
Fraught rather with depression than delight,  
Though shame it were, could I not look  
around,

By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.  
Yet happier in my judgment, even than you  
With your bright transports fairly may be  
deemed, 160

The wandering Herbalist, — who, clear  
alike

From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing  
thoughts,

Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,  
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight regard  
Of transitory interest, and peeps round  
For some rare floweret of the hills, or  
plant

Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for wins,  
Or learns, at least, that 't is not to be won:  
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed  
hound,

By soul-engrossing instinct driven along 170  
Through wood or open field, the harmless  
Man

Departs, intent upon his onward quest ! —  
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,  
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft  
By scars which his activity has left  
Beside our roads and pathways, though,  
thank Heaven !

This covert nook reports not of his hand)  
He who with pocket-hammer smites the  
edge

Of luckless rock or prominent stone, dis-  
guised

In weather-stains or crusted o'er by Na-  
ture 180

With her first growths, detaching by the  
stroke

A chip or splinter — to resolve his doubts;  
And, with that ready answer satisfied,  
The substance classes by some barbarous  
name,

And hurries on; or from the fragments  
picks

His specimen, if but haply interveined  
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal  
cube

Lurk in its cells — and thinks himself en-  
riched,

Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before!  
 Trusted safely each to his pursuit, <sup>190</sup>  
 Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill  
 Range; if it please them, speed from clime  
 to clime;  
 The mind is full — and free from pain their  
 pasture."

"Then," said I, interposing, "One is near,  
 Who cannot but possess in your esteem  
 Place worthier still of envy. May I name,  
 Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-  
 boy?"

Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form,  
 Youngest apprentice in the school of art!  
 Him, as we entered from the open glen, <sup>200</sup>  
 You might have noticed, busily engaged,  
 Heart, soul, and hands, — in mending the  
 defects

Left in the fabric of a leaky dam  
 Raised for enabling this penurious stream  
 To turn a slender mill (that new-made  
 plaything)

For his delight — the happiest he of all!"

"Far happiest," answered the despond-  
 ing Man,

"If, such as now he is, he might remain!  
 Ah! what avails imagination high  
 Or question deep? what profits all that  
 earth, <sup>210</sup>

Or heaven's blue vault, is suffered to put  
 forth

Of impulse or allurements, for the Soul  
 To quit the beaten track of life, and soar  
 Far as she finds a yielding element  
 In past or future; far as she can go  
 Through time or space — if neither in the  
 one,

Nor in the other region, nor in aught  
 That Fancy, dreaming o'er the map of  
 things,  
 Hath placed beyond these penetrable  
 bounds,

Words of assurance can be heard; if no-  
 where <sup>220</sup>

A habitation, for consummate good,  
 Or for progressive virtue, by the search  
 Can be attained, — a better sanctuary  
 From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless  
 grave?"

"Is this," the grey-haired Wanderer  
 mildly said,

"The voice, which we so lately overheard,

To that same child, addressing tenderly  
 The consolations of a hopeful mind?  
 '*His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.*'

These were your words; and, verily, me-  
 thinks <sup>230</sup>

Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop  
 Than when we soar."

The Other, not displeased,  
 Promptly replied — "My notion is the  
 same.

And I, without reluctance, could decline  
 All act of inquisition whence we rise,  
 And what, when breath hath ceased, we  
 may become.

Here are we, in a bright and breathing  
 world.

Our origin, what matters it? In lack  
 Of worthier explanation, say at once  
 With the American (a thought which suits  
 The place where now we stand) that certain  
 men <sup>241</sup>

Leapt out together from a rocky cave;  
 And these were the first parents of man-  
 kind:

Or, if a different image be recalled  
 By the warm sunshine, and the jocund  
 voice

Of insects chirping out their careless lives  
 On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled  
 turf,

Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit  
 As sound — blithe race! whose mantles  
 were bedecked

With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they  
 Had sprung, like those bright creatures,  
 from the soil <sup>251</sup>

Whereon their endless generations dwelt.  
 But stop! — these theoretic fancies jar  
 On serious minds: then, as the Hindoos  
 draw

Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount,  
 Even so deduce the stream of human life  
 From seats of power divine; and hope, or  
 trust,

That our existence winds her stately course  
 Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part  
 Of a living ocean; or, to sink engulfed, <sup>260</sup>  
 Like Niger, in impenetrable sands  
 And utter darkness: thought which may be  
 faced,

Though comfortless! —

Not of myself I speak:  
 Such acquiescence neither doth imply,  
 In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed  
 By natural piety; nor a lofty mind,

By philosophic discipline prepared  
 For calm subjection to acknowledged law;  
 Pleased to have been, contented not to be.  
 Such palms I boast not; — no! to me, who  
 find 270

Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,  
 Little to praise, and nothing to regret,  
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like  
 joys

That scarcely seem to have belonged to  
 me)

If I must take my choice between the pair  
 That rule alternately the weary hours,  
 Night is than day more acceptable; sleep  
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear  
 A better state than waking; death than  
 sleep;

Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm, 280  
 Though under covert of the wormy ground!

Yet be it said, in justice to myself,  
 That in more genial times, when I was free  
 To explore the destiny of human kind  
 (Not as an intellectual game pursued  
 With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat  
 Irsome sensations; but by love of truth  
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight  
 In feeding thought, wherever thought could  
 feed)

I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,  
 For to my judgment such they then ap-  
 peared, 291

Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)  
 Who, in this frame of human life, perceive  
 An object whereunto their souls are tied  
 In discontented wedlock; nor did e'er,  
 From me, those dark impervious shades,  
 that hang

Upon the region whither we are bound,  
 Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams  
 Of present sunshine. — Deities that float  
 On wings, angelic Spirits! I could muse 300  
 O'er what from eldest time we have been  
 told

Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,  
 And with the imagination rest content,  
 Not wishing more; repining not to tread  
 The little sinuous path of earthly care,  
 By flowers embellished, and by springs re-  
 freshed.

— 'Blow winds of autumn! — let your  
 chilling breath

'Take the live herbage from the mead, and  
 strip

'The shady forest of its green attire, —

'And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse  
 'The gentle brooks! — Your desolating  
 sway, 311

'Sheds,' I exclaimed, 'no sadness upon me,  
 'And no disorder in your rage I find.

'What dignity, what beauty, in this change  
 'From mild to angry, and from sad to  
 gay,

'Alternate and revolving! How benign,  
 'How rich in animation and delight,

'How bountiful these elements — compared  
 'With aught, as more desirable and fair,

'Devised by fancy for the golden age; 320  
 'Or the perpetual warbling that prevails

'In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,  
 'Through the long year in constant quiet  
 bound,

'Night hushed as night, the day serene as  
 day!'

— But why this tedious record? — Age, we  
 know

Is garrulous; and solitude is apt  
 To anticipate the privilege of Age,  
 From far ye come; and surely with a hope  
 Of better entertainment: — let us hence!"

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more  
 loth 330

To be diverted from our present theme,  
 I said, "My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with  
 yours,

Would push this censure farther; — for, if  
 smiles

Of scornful pity be the just reward  
 Of Poesy thus courteously employed

In framing models to improve the scheme  
 Of Man's existence, and recast the world,

Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,  
 Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,

A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull? 340  
 Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts

Establish sounder titles of esteem  
 For her, who (all too timid and reserved

For onset, for resistance too inert,  
 Too weak for suffering, and for hope too  
 tame)

Placed, among flowery gardens curtained  
 round

With world-excluding groves, the brother-  
 hood

Of soft Epicureans, taught — if they  
 The ends of being would secure, and win

The crown of wisdom — to yield up their  
 souls 350

To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring

Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,"  
I cried, "more worthy of regard, the  
Power,  
Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed  
The Stoic's heart against the vain approach  
Of admiration, and all sense of joy?"

His countenance gave notice that my zeal  
Accorded little with his present mind;  
I ceased, and he resumed. — "Ah! gentle  
Sir,

Slight, if you will, the *means*; but spare to  
slight 360

The *end* of those, who did, by system, rank,  
As the prime object of a wise man's aim,  
Security from shock of accident,  
Release from fear; and cherished peaceful  
days

For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief  
good,

And only reasonable felicity.

What motive drew, what impulse, I would  
ask,

Through a long course of later ages, drove,  
The hermit to his cell in forest wide;  
Or what detained him, till his closing eyes  
Took their last farewell of the sun and  
stars, 371

Fast anchored in the desert? — Not alone  
Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,  
Wrongs undressed, or insults unavenged  
And unavengable, defeated pride,  
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,  
Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,  
Love with despair, or grief in agony; —  
Not always from intolerable pangs

He fled; but, compassed round by pleasure,  
sighed 380

For independent happiness; craving peace,  
The central feeling of all happiness,  
Not as a refuge from distress or pain,  
A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,  
But for its absolute self; a life of peace,  
Stability without regret or fear;  
That hath been, is, and shall be ever-  
more! —

Such the reward he sought; and wore out  
life,

There, where on few external things his  
heart

Was set, and those his own; or, if not his,  
Subsisting under nature's stedfast law. 391

What other yearning was the master tie  
Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock

Aërial, or in green secluded vale,  
One after one, collected from afar,  
An undissolving fellowship? — What but  
this,

The universal instinct of repose,  
The longing for confirmed tranquillity,  
Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:  
The life where hope and memory are as  
one; 400

Where earth is quiet and her face un-  
changed

Save by the simplest toil of human hands  
Or seasons' difference; the immortal Soul  
Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed  
To meditation in that quietness! —

Such was their scheme: and though the  
wished-for end

By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained  
By none, they for the attempt, and pains  
employed,

Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed  
From the unqualified disdain, that once 410  
Would have been cast upon them by my  
voice

Delivering her decisions from the seat  
Of forward youth — that scruples not to  
solve

Doubts, and determine questions, by the  
rules

Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone  
To overweening faith; and is inflamed,  
By courage, to demand from real life  
The test of act and suffering, to provoke  
Hostility — how dreadful when it comes,  
Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt! 420

A child of earth, I rested, in that stage  
Of my past course to which these thoughts  
advert,

Upon earth's native energies; forgetting  
That mine was a condition which required  
Nor energy, nor fortitude — a calm  
Without vicissitude; which, if the like  
Had been presented to my view elsewhere,  
I might have even been tempted to despise.  
But no — for the serene was always bright;  
Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing,  
With joy, and — oh! that memory should  
survive 431

To speak the word — with rapture! Nature's  
boon,

Life's genuine inspiration, happiness  
Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign;  
Abused, as all possessions are abused  
That are not prized according to their worth.

And yet, what worth? what good is given  
to men,  
More solid than the gilded clouds of  
heaven?  
What joy more lasting than a vernal  
flower? —

None! 't is the general plaint of human kind  
In solitude: and mutually addressed 441  
From each to all, for wisdom's sake: —  
This truth

The priest announces from his holy seat:  
And, crowned with garlands in the summer  
grove,

The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.  
Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,  
Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom  
Of this same life, compelling us to grieve  
That the prosperities of love and joy 449  
Should be permitted, oft-times, to endure  
So long, and be at once cast down for ever.  
Oh! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned  
A course of days composing happy months,  
And they as happy years; the present still  
So like the past, and both so firm a pledge  
Of a congenial future, that the wheels  
Of pleasure move without the aid of hope:  
For Mutability is Nature's bane;  
And slighted Hope *will* be avenged; and,  
when

Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not;  
But in her stead — fear — doubt — and  
agony!" 461

This was the bitter language of the heart:  
But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of  
voice,

Though discomposed and vehement, were  
such

As skill and graceful nature might suggest  
To a proficient of the tragic scene  
Standing before the multitude, beset  
With dark events. Desirous to divert  
Or stem the current of the speaker's  
thoughts,

We signified a wish to leave that place 470  
Of stillness and close privacy, a nook  
That seemed for self-examination made;  
Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,  
Hidden from all men's view. To our at-  
tempt

He yielded not; but, pointing to a slope  
Of mossy turf defended from the sun,  
And on that couch inviting us to rest,  
Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned  
A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

"You never saw, your eyes did never look  
On the bright form of Her whom once I  
loved: — 481

Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,  
A sound unknown to you; else, honoured  
Friend!

Your heart had borne a pitiable share  
Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,  
And suffer now, not seldom, from the  
thought

That I remember, and can weep no more. —  
Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit  
Of self-esteem; and by the cutting blasts  
Of self-reproach familiarly assailed; 490  
Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness  
But that some leaf of your regard should  
hang

Upon my naked branches: — lively thoughts  
Give birth, full often, to unguarded words;  
I grieve that, in your presence, from my  
tongue

Too much of frailty hath already dropped;  
But that too much demands still more.

You know,  
Revered Compatriot — and to you, kind Sir,  
(Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come  
Following the guidance of these welcome  
feet 500

To our secluded vale) it may be told —  
That my demerits did not sue in vain  
To One on whose mild radiance many gazed  
With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair  
Bride —

In the devotedness of youthful love,  
Preferring me to parents, and the choir  
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,  
And all known places and familiar sights  
(Resigned with sadness gently weighing  
down

Her trembling expectations, but no more 510  
Than did to her due honour, and to me  
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime  
In what I had to build upon) — this Bride,  
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led  
To a low cottage in a sunny bay,  
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,  
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,  
On Devon's leafy shores; — a sheltered hold,  
In a soft clime encouraging the soil  
To a luxuriant bounty! — As our steps 520  
Approach the embowered abode — our  
chosen seat —

See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,  
The unendangered myrtle, decked with  
flowers,

Before the threshold stands to welcome us !  
While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbour-  
hood,

Not overlooked but courting no regard,  
Those native plants, the holly and the yew,  
Gave modest intimation to the mind  
How willingly their aid they would unite 579  
With the green myrtle, to endear the hours  
Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.  
— Wild were the walks upon those lonely

Downs,  
Track leading into track; how marked, how  
worn

Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse  
Winding away its never-ending line  
On their smooth surface, evidence was none;  
But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,  
A range of unappropriated earth,  
Where youth's ambitious feet might move  
at large;

Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld  
The shining giver of the day diffuse 541  
His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land  
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires;  
As our enjoyments, boundless. — From  
those heights

We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan  
combs;

Where arbours of impenetrable shade,  
And mossy seats, detained us side by side,  
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our  
hearts

'That all the grove and all the day was  
ours.'

O happy time ! still happier was at hand;  
For Nature called my Partner to resign 551  
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,  
Enjoyed by us in common. — To my hope,  
To my heart's wish, my tender Mate be-  
came

The thankful captive of maternal bonds;  
And those wild paths were left to me alone.  
There could I meditate on follies past;  
And, like a weary voyager escaped  
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace  
A course of vain delights and thoughtless  
guilt, 560

And self-indulgence — without shame pur-  
sued.

There, undisturbed, could think of and  
could thank

Her whose submissive spirit was to me  
Rule and restraint — my guardian — shall I  
say

That earthly Providence, whose guiding  
love

Within a port of rest had lodged me safe;  
Safe from temptation, and from danger far ?  
Strains followed of acknowledgment ad-  
dressed

To an authority enthroned above  
The reach of sight; from whom, as from  
their source 570

Proceed all visible ministers of good  
That walk the earth — Father of heaven  
and earth,

Father, and king, and judge, adored and  
feared !

These acts of mind, and memory, and  
heart,

And spirit — interrupted and relieved  
By observations transient as the glance  
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form  
Cleaving with power inherent and intense,  
As the mute insect fixed upon the plant  
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from  
whose cup 580

It draws its nourishment imperceptibly —  
Endeared my wanderings; and the mo-  
ther's kiss

And infant's smile awaited my return.

In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,  
Companions daily, often all day long;  
Not placed by fortune within easy reach  
Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught  
Beyond the allowance of our own fire-side,  
The twain within our happy cottage born,  
Inmates, and heirs of our united love; 590  
Graced mutually by difference of sex,  
And with no wider interval of time  
Between their several births than served  
for one

To establish something of a leader's sway;  
Yet left them joined by sympathy in age;  
Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.  
On these two pillars rested as in air  
Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,  
Your courtesy withholds not from my  
words

Attentive audience. But, oh ! gentle  
Friends, 600

As times of quiet and unbroken peace,  
Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,  
Give back faint echoes from the historian's  
page;

So, in the imperfect sounds of this dis-  
course,

Depressed I hear, how faithless is the voice  
Which those most blissful days reverberate.  
What special record can, or need, be given  
To rules and habits, whereby much was  
done,

But all within the sphere of little things;  
Of humble, though, to us, important cares,  
And precious interests? Smoothly did our  
life 611

Advance, swerving not from the path pre-  
scribed;

Her annual, her diurnal, round alike  
Maintained with faithful care. And you  
divine

The worst effects that our condition saw  
If you imagine changes slowly wrought,  
And in their progress unperceivable;  
Not wished for; sometimes noticed with a  
sigh,

(Whate'er of good or lovely they might  
bring)

Sighs of regret, for the familiar good 620  
And loveliness endeared which they re-  
moved.

Seven years of occupation undisturbed  
Established seemingly a right to hold  
That happiness; and use and habit gave,  
To what an alien spirit had acquired,  
A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,  
With thoughts and wishes bounded to this  
world,

I lived and breathed; most grateful — if to  
enjoy

Without repining or desire for more,  
For different lot, or change to higher sphere,  
(Only except some impulses of pride 631  
With no determined object, though upheld  
By theories with suitable support) —

Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy  
Be proof of gratitude for what we have;  
Else, I allow, most thankless. — But, at  
once,

From some dark seat of fatal power was  
urged

A claim that shattered all. — Our bloom-  
ing girl,

Caught in the gripe of death, with such  
brief time

To struggle in as scarcely would allow 640  
Her cheek to change its colour, was con-  
veyed

From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions  
Where height, or depth, admits not the  
approach

Of living man, though longing to pursue.  
— With even as brief a warning — and how  
soon,

With what short interval of time between,  
I tremble yet to think of — our last prop,  
Our happy life's only remaining stay —  
The brother followed; and was seen no  
more!

Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless  
winds 650

Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,  
The Mother now remained; as if in her,  
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,  
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,  
This second visitation had no power  
To shake; but only to bind up and seal;  
And to establish thankfulness of heart  
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.  
The eminence whereon her spirit stood,  
Mine was unable to attain. Immense 660  
The space that severed us! But, as the  
sight

Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs  
Incalculably distant; so, I felt

That consolation may descend from far  
(And that is intercourse, and union, too.)  
While, overcome with speechless gratitude,  
And, with a holier love inspired, I looked  
On her — at once superior to my woes  
And partner of my loss. — O heavy change,  
Dimmess o'er this clear luminary crept 670

Insensibly; — the immortal and divine  
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,  
As from the pinnacle of worldly state  
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell  
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,  
And keen heart-anguish — of itself ashamed,  
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:

And, so consumed, she melted from my  
arms;

And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

What followed cannot be reviewed in  
thought; 680

Much less, retraced in words. If she, of  
life

Blameless, so intimate with love and joy  
And all the tender motions of the soul,  
Had been supplanted, could I hope to  
stand —

Infirm, dependent, and now destitute?  
I called on dreams and visions, to disclose  
That which is veiled from waking thought;  
conjured



Eternity, as men constrain a ghost  
To appear and answer; to the grave I spake  
Implopingly; — looked up, and asked the  
Heavens 690

If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,  
If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield  
Of the departed spirit — what abode  
It occupies — what consciousness retains  
Of former loves and interests. Then my  
soul

Turned inward, — to examine of what stuff  
Time's fetters are composed; and life was  
put

To inquisition, long and profitless !

By pain of heart — now checked — and now  
impelled —

The intellectual power, through words and  
things, 700

Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way !  
And from those transports, and these toils  
abstruse,

Some trace am I enabled to retain  
Of time, else lost; — existing unto me  
Only by records in myself not found.

From that abstraction I was roused, —  
and how ?

Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash  
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave  
Of these wild hills. For, lo ! the dread  
Bastile,

With all the chambers in its horrid towers,  
Fell to the ground: — by violence over-  
thrown 711

Of indignation; and with shouts that  
drowned

The crash it made in falling ! From the  
wreck

A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
The appointed seat of equitable law  
And mild paternal sway. The potent shock  
I felt; the transformation I perceived,  
As marvellously seized as in that moment  
When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld  
Glory — beyond all glory ever seen, 720  
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,  
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic  
harps

In every grove were ringing, 'War shall  
cease;

'Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured ?  
'Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers,  
to deck

'The tree of Liberty.' — My heart re-  
bounded;

My melancholy voice the chorus joined;  
— 'Be joyful all ye nations; in all lands,  
'Ye that are capable of joy be glad !  
'Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to your-  
selves 730  
'In others ye shall promptly find; — and all,  
'Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,  
'Shall with one heart honour their common  
kind.'

Thus was I reconverted to the world;  
Society became my glittering bride,  
And airy hopes my children. — From the  
depths

Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,  
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace  
Of institutions, and the forms of things;  
As they exist, in mutable array, 740  
Upon life's surface. What, though in my  
veins

There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I  
breathed

The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal  
Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs  
Of my exhausted heart. If busy men  
In sober conclave met, to weave a web  
Of amity, whose living threads should  
stretch

Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,  
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise  
And acclamation, crowds in open air 750  
Expressed the tumult of their minds, my  
voice

There mingled, heard or not. The powers  
of song

I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,  
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay  
Of thanks and expectation, in accord  
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule  
Returned, — a progeny of golden years  
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.  
— With promises the Hebrew Scriptures  
teem:

I felt their invitation; and resumed 760  
A long-suspended office in the House  
Of public worship, where, the glowing  
phrase

Of ancient inspiration serving me,  
I promised also, — with undaunted trust  
Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy;  
The admiration winning of the crowd;  
The help desiring of the pure devout.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed !  
But History, time's slavish scribe, will tell

How rapidly the zealots of the cause 770  
 Disbanded — or in hostile ranks appeared;  
 Some, tired of honest service; these, out-  
     done,  
 Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims  
 Of fiercer zealots — so confusion reigned,  
 And the more faithful were compelled to  
     exclaim,  
 As Brutus did to Virtue, 'Liberty,  
 'I worshipped thee, and find thee but a  
     Shade!'

Such recantation had for me no charm,  
 Nor would I bend to it; who should have  
     grieved

At aught, however fair, that bore the mien  
 Of a conclusion, or catastrophe. 781  
 Why then conceal, that, when the simply  
     good

In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought  
 Other support, not scrupulous whence it  
     came;

And, by what compromise it stood, not  
     nice?

Enough if notions seemed to be high-  
     pitched,

And qualities determined. — Among men  
 So character'd did I maintain a strife  
 Hopeless, and still more hopeless every  
     hour;

But, in the process, I began to feel 790  
 That, if the emancipation of the world  
 Were missed, I should at least secure my  
     own,

And be in part compensated. For rights,  
 Widely — inveterately usurped upon,  
 I spake with vehemence; and promptly  
     seized

All that Abstraction furnished for my needs  
 Or purposes; nor scrupled to proclaim,  
 And propagate, by liberty of life,  
 Those new persuasions. Not that I re-  
     joiced,

Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant  
     course, 800

For its own sake; but farthest from the  
     walk

Which I had trod in happiness and peace,  
 Was most inviting to a troubled mind,  
 That, in a struggling and distempered  
     world,

Saw a seductive image of herself.  
 Yet, mark the contradictions of which Man  
 Is still the sport! Here Nature was my  
     guide,

The Nature of the dissolute; but thee,  
 O fostering Nature! I rejected — smiled  
 At others' tears in pity; and in scorn 810  
 At those, which thy soft influence some-  
     times drew

From my unguarded heart. — The tranquil  
     shores

Of Britain circumscribed me; else, perhaps  
 I might have been entangled among deeds,  
 Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor —  
 Despise, as senseless: for my spirit relished  
 Strangely the exasperation of that Land,  
 Which turned an angry beak against the  
     down

Of her own breast; confounded into hope  
 Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

But all was quieted by iron bonds 821  
 Of military sway. The shifting aims,  
 The moral interests, the creative might,  
 The varied functions and high attributes  
 Of civil action, yielded to a power  
 Formal, and odious, and contemptible.  
 — In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;  
 The weak were praised, rewarded, and ad-  
     vanced;

And, from the impulse of a just disdain,  
 Once more did I retire into myself. 830  
 There feeling no contentment, I resolved  
 To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,  
 Remote from Europe; from her blasted  
     hopes;  
 Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the At-  
     lantic Main  
 The ship went gliding with her thoughtless  
     crew;

And who among them but an Exile, freed  
 From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit  
 Among the busily-employed, not more 839  
 With obligation charged, with service taxed,  
 Than the loose pendant — to the idle wind  
 Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye  
     Powers

Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,  
 Oh, never let the Wretched, if a choice  
 Be left him, trust the freight of his dis-  
     tress

To a long voyage on the silent deep!  
 For, like a plague, will memory break out;  
 And, in the blank and solitude of things,  
 Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,  
 Will conscience prey. — Feebly must they  
     have felt 850

Who, in old time, attired with snakes and  
whips

The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards  
Were turned on me — the face of her I  
loved;

The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing  
Tender reproaches, insupportable !  
Where now that boasted liberty ? No wel-  
come

From unknown objects I received; and  
those,

Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky  
Did, in the placid clearness of the night,  
Disclose, had accusations to prefer <sup>860</sup>  
Against my peace. Within the cabin stood  
That volume — as a compass for the soul —  
Revered among the nations. I implored  
Its guidance; but the infallible support  
Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why re-  
fused

To One by storms annoyed and adverse  
winds;

Perplexed with currents; of his weakness  
sick;

Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,  
And by his nature's, ignorance, dismayed !

Long-wished-for sight, the Western  
World appeared; <sup>870</sup>

And, when the ship was moored, I leaped  
ashore

Indignantly — resolved to be a man,  
Who, having o'er the past no power, would  
live

No longer in subjection to the past,  
With abject mind — from a tyrannic lord  
Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured:  
So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared  
Some boundary, which his followers may  
not cross

In prosecution of their deadly chase,  
Respiring I looked round. — How bright  
the sun, <sup>880</sup>

The breeze how soft ! Can anything pro-  
duced

In the old World compare, thought I, for  
power

And majesty with this gigantic stream,  
Sprung from the desert ? And behold a  
city

Fresh, youthful, and aspiring ! What are  
these

To me, or I to them ? As much at least  
As he desires that they should be, whom  
winds

And waves have wafted to this distant  
shore,

In the condition of a damaged seed,  
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take  
root. <sup>890</sup>

Here may I roam at large; — my business  
is,

Roaming at large, to observe, and not to  
feel,

And, therefore, not to act — convinced that  
all

Which bears the name of action, howsoe'er  
Beginning, ends in servitude — still painful,  
And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,  
On nearer view, a motley spectacle  
Appeared, of high pretensions, — unre-  
proved

But by the obstreperous voice of higher  
still;

Big passions strutting on a petty stage; <sup>900</sup>  
Which a detached spectator may regard  
Not unamused. — But ridicule demands  
Quick change of objects; and, to laugh  
alone,

At a composing distance from the haunts  
Of strife and folly, though it be a treat  
As choice as musing Leisure can bestow;  
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,  
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,  
Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,  
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit <sup>910</sup>  
For the gross spirit of mankind, — the one  
That soonest fails to please, and quickest  
turns

Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,  
Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge  
Of her own passions; and to regions haste,  
Whose shades have never felt the encroach-  
ing axe,

Or soil endured a transfer in the mart  
Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,  
Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak  
In combination, (wherefore else driven  
back <sup>920</sup>

So far, and of his old inheritance  
So easily deprived ?) but, for that cause,  
More dignified, and stronger in himself;  
Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.

True, the intelligence of social art  
Hath overpowered his forefathers, and soon  
Will sweep the remnant of his line away;  
But contemplations, worthier, nobler far  
Than her destructive worthies, attend  
His independence, when along the side <sup>930</sup>

Of Mississippi, or that northern stream  
That spreads into successive seas, he walks;  
Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,  
And his innate capacities of soul,  
There imaged: or when, having gained the  
top

Of some commanding eminence, which yet  
Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys  
Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast  
Expanse of unappropriated earth,  
With mind that sheds a light on what he  
sees; 940

Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,  
Pouring above his head its radiance down  
Upon a living and rejoicing world!

So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated  
woods

I bent my way; and, roaming far and wide,  
Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-bird;  
And, while the melancholy Muccawiss  
(The sportive bird's companion in the grove)  
Repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,  
I sympathised at leisure with the sound; 950  
But that pure archetype of human great-  
ness,

I found him not. There, in his stead, ap-  
peared

A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;  
Remorseless, and submissive to no law  
But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told! Here am I — ye have  
heard

What evidence I seek, and vainly seek;  
What from my fellow-beings I require,  
And either they have not to give, or I  
Lack virtue to receive; what I myself, 960  
Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost  
Nor can regain. How languidly I look  
Upon this visible fabric of the world,  
May be divined — perhaps it hath been  
said: —

But spare your pity, if there be in me  
Aught that deserves respect: for I exist,  
Within myself, not comfortless. — The  
tenor

Which my life holds, he readily may con-  
ceive

Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain  
brook

In some still passage of its course, and  
seen, 970

Within the depths of its capacious breast,  
Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure sky;

And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,  
And conglobated bubbles undissolved,  
Numerous as stars; that, by their onward  
lapse,

Betray to sight the motion of the stream,  
Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard  
A softened roar, or murmur; and the sound  
Though soothing, and the little floating isles  
Though beautiful, are both by Nature  
charged 980

With the same pensive office; and make  
known

Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt  
Precipitations and untoward straits,  
The earth-born wanderer hath passed; and  
quickly,

That respite o'er, like traverses and toils  
Must be again encounter. — Such a stream  
Is human Life; and so the Spirit fares  
In the best quiet to her course allowed;  
And such is mine, — save only for a hope 989  
That my particular current soon will reach  
The unfathomable gulf, where all is still!"

## BOOK FOURTH

### DESPONDENCY CORRECTED

#### ARGUMENT

State of feeling produced by the foregoing  
Narrative — A belief in a superintending Pro-  
vidence the only adequate support under afflic-  
tion — Wanderer's ejaculation — Acknowledges  
the difficulty of a lively faith — Hence immod-  
erate sorrow — Exhortations — How received  
— Wanderer applies his discourse to that other  
cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind — Dis-  
appointment from the French Revolution —  
States grounds of hope, and insists on the ne-  
cessity of patience and fortitude with respect  
to the course of great revolutions — Knowledge  
the source of tranquillity — Rural Solitude  
favourable to knowledge of the inferior Crea-  
tures; Study of their habits and ways recom-  
mended; exhortation to bodily exertion and  
communion with Nature — Morbid Solitude  
pitiable — Superstition better than apathy —  
Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy  
of society — The various modes of Religion  
prevented it — Illustrated in the Jewish, Per-  
sian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes  
of belief — Solitary interposes — Wanderer  
points out the influence of religious and imagi-  
native feeling in the humble ranks of society,  
illustrated from present and past times —  
These principles tend to recall exploded super-

stitutions and popery — Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers — Recommends other lights and guides — Asserts the power of the soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how — Reply — Personal appeal — Exhortation to activity of body renewed — How to commune with Nature — Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason — Effect of his discourse — Evening; Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely vale  
His mournful narrative — commenced in  
pain,

In pain commenced, and ended without  
peace:

Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with  
strains

Of native feeling, grateful to our minds,  
And yielding surely some relief to his,  
While we sate listening with compassion due.  
A pause of silence followed; then, with  
voice

That did not falter though the heart was  
moved,

The Wanderer said: —

“One adequate support  
For the calamities of mortal life  
Exists — one only; an assured belief  
That the procession of our fate, howe’er  
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being  
Of infinite benevolence and power;  
Whose everlasting purposes embrace  
All accidents, converting them to good.  
— The darts of anguish fix not where the  
seat

Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified  
By acquiescence in the Will supreme  
For time and for eternity; by faith,  
Faith absolute in God, including hope,  
And the defence that lies in boundless love  
Of his perfections; with habitual dread  
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured  
Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,  
To the dishonour of his holy name.  
Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the  
world!

Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart;  
Restore their languid spirits, and recall  
Their lost affections unto thee and thine!”

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,  
He thus continued, lifting up his eyes

To heaven: — “How beautiful this dome of  
sky;

And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed  
At thy command, how awful! Shall the  
Soul,

Human and rational, report of thee  
Even less than these? — Be mute who will,  
who can,

Yet I will praise thee with impassioned  
voice:

My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd,  
Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast  
built,

For thy own glory, in the wilderness!  
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,  
In such a temple as we now behold  
Reared for thy presence: therefore, am I  
bound

To worship, here, and everywhere — as one  
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to  
tread,

From childhood up, the ways of poverty;  
From unreflecting ignorance preserved,  
And from debasement rescued. — By thy  
grace

The particle divine remained unquenched;  
And, ’mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,  
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless  
flowers,

From paradise transplanted: wintry age  
Impends; the frost will gather round my  
heart;

If the flowers wither, I am worse than dead!  
— Come, labour, when the worn-out frame  
requires

Perpetual sabbath; come, disease and want;  
And sad exclusion through decay of sense;  
But leave me unabated trust in thee —

And let thy favour, to the end of life,  
Inspire me with ability to seek  
Repose and hope among eternal things —  
Father of heaven and earth! and I am rich,  
And will possess my portion in content!

And what are things eternal? — powers  
depart,”

The grey-haired Wanderer steadfastly re-  
plied,

Answering the question which himself had  
asked,

“Possessions vanish, and opinions change,  
And passions hold a fluctuating seat:  
But, by the storms of circumstance un-  
shaken,

And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,

Duty exists; — immutably survive,  
For our support, the measures and the forms,  
Which an abstract intelligence supplies;  
Whose kingdom is, where time and space  
are not.

Of other converse which mind, soul, and  
heart,

Do, with united urgency, require,  
What more that may not perish? — Thou,  
dread source,

Prime, self-existing cause and end of all <sup>80</sup>  
That in the scale of being fill their place;  
Above our human region, or below,  
Set and sustained; — thou, who didst wrap  
the cloud

Of infancy around us, that thyself,  
Therein, with our simplicity awhile  
Might'st hold, on earth, communion undis-  
turbed;

Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,  
Or from its death-like void, with punctual  
care,

And touch as gentle as the morning light,  
Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense  
And reason's steadfast rule — thou, thou  
alone

Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits, <sup>91</sup>  
Which thou includest, as the sea her waves:  
For adoration thou endur'st; endure  
For consciousness the motions of thy will;  
For apprehension those transcendent truths  
Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws  
(Submission constituting strength and  
power)

Even to thy Being's infinite majesty!  
This universe shall pass away — a work <sup>100</sup>  
Glorious! because the shadow of thy might,  
A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.  
Ah! if the time must come, in which my feet  
No more shall stray where meditation leads,  
By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy  
wild,

Loved haunts like these; the unimprisoned  
Mind

May yet have scope to range among her own,  
Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.  
If the dear faculty of sight should fail,  
Still, it may be allowed me to remember  
What visionary powers of eye and soul <sup>111</sup>  
In youth were mine; when, stationed on the  
top

Of some huge hill — expectant, I beheld  
The sun rise up, from distant climes returned  
Darkness to chase, and sleep; and bring the  
day

His bounteous gift! or saw him toward the  
deep

Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds  
Attended; they, my spirit was entranced  
With joy exalted to beatitude;  
The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,  
And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with  
light, <sup>121</sup>  
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!

Those fervent raptures are for ever flown;  
And, since their date, my soul hath under-  
gone

Change manifold, for better or for worse:  
Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire  
Heavenward; and chide the part of me that  
flags,

Through sinful choice; or dread necessity  
On human nature from above imposed.

'Tis, by comparison, an easy task <sup>130</sup>  
Earth to despise; but, to converse with  
heaven —

This is not easy: — to relinquish all  
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,  
And stand in freedom loosened from this  
world,

I deem not arduous; but must needs confess  
That 't is a thing impossible to frame  
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires;  
And the most difficult of tasks to keep  
Heights which the soul is competent to  
gain.

— Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his,  
Which, when they should sustain themselves  
aloft, <sup>141</sup>

Want due consistence; like a pillar of smoke,  
That with majestic energy from earth  
Rises; but, having reached the thinner air,  
Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.  
From this infirmity of mortal kind  
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not; at  
least,

If grief be something hallowed and ordained,  
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,  
Yet, through this weakness of the general  
heart, <sup>150</sup>

Is it enabled to maintain its hold  
In that excess which conscience disapproves.  
For who could sink and settle to that point  
Of selfishness; so senseless who could be  
As long and perseveringly to mourn  
For any object of his love, removed  
From this unstable world, if he could fix  
A satisfying view upon that state  
Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,

Which reason promises, and holy writ 160  
Ensures to all believers? — Yet mistrust  
Is of such incapacity, methinks,  
No natural branch; despondency far less;  
And, least of all, is absolute despair.

— And, if there be whose tender frames  
have drooped  
Even to the dust; apparently, through  
weight

Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power  
An agonizing sorrow to transmute;  
Deem not that proof is here of hope with-  
held

When wanted most; a confidence impaired  
So pitifully, that, having ceased to see 171  
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by  
love

Of what is lost, and perish through regret.  
Oh! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees  
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs  
To realize the vision, with intense  
And over-constant yearning; — there —  
there lies

The excess, by which the balance is de-  
stroyed.

Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh.  
This vital warmth too cold, these visual  
orbs, 180

Though inconceivably endowed, too dim  
For any passion of the soul that leads  
To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths  
Of time and change disdaining, takes its  
course

Along the line of limitless desires.  
I, speaking now from such disorder free,  
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace,  
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore  
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake  
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless  
love. 190

Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
In mercy, carried infinite degrees  
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:  
Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,  
That finds no limits but her own pure will.

Here then we rest; not fearing for our  
creed

The worst that human reasoning can  
achieve,

To unsettle or perplex it: yet with pain  
Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,  
That, though immovably convinced, we  
want 201

Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith  
As soldiers live by courage; as, by strength  
Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.  
Alas! the endowment of immortal power  
Is matched unequally with custom, time,  
And domineering faculties of sense  
In *all*; in most, with superadded foes,  
Idle temptations; open vanities,  
Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing  
world; 210

And, in the private regions of the mind,  
Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despite,  
Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,  
Distress and care. What then remains? —  
To seek

Those helps for his occasions ever near  
Who lacks not will to use them; vows, re-  
newed

On the first motion of a holy thought;  
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and  
prayer —

A stream, which, from the fountain of the  
heart

Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows 220  
Without access of unexpected strength.

But, above all, the victory is most sure  
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue,  
strives

To yield entire submission to the law  
Of conscience — conscience revered and  
obeyed,

As God's most intimate presence in the  
soul,

And his most perfect image in the world.  
— Endeavour thus to live; these rules re-  
gard;

These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat  
Shall then be yours among the happy few  
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal  
air, 231

Sons of the morning. For your nobler  
part,

Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,  
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased  
away;

With only such degree of sadness left  
As may support longings of pure desire;  
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly  
In the sublime attractions of the grave."

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage  
Poured forth his aspirations, and announced  
His judgments, near that lonely house we  
paced 241

A plot of greensward, seemingly preserved

By nature's care from wreck of scattered  
stones,

And from encroachment of encircling heath:  
Small space! but, for reiterated steps,  
Smooth and commodious; as a stately deck  
Which to and fro the mariner is used

To tread for pastime, talking with his  
mates,

Or haply thinking of far-distant friends, <sup>249</sup>  
While the ship glides before a steady breeze.  
Stillness prevailed around us: and the voice  
That spake was capable to lift the soul

Toward regions yet more tranquil. But,  
methought,

That he, whose fixed despondency had  
given

Impulse and motive to that strong dis-  
course,

Was less upraised in spirit than abashed;  
Shrinking from admonition, like a man  
Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.  
Yet not to be diverted from his aim,  
The Sage continued: —

“For that other loss,

The loss of confidence in social man, <sup>261</sup>  
By the unexpected transports of our age  
Carried so high, that every thought, which  
looked

Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,  
To many seemed superfluous — as, no cause  
Could e'er for such exalted confidence  
Exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:  
The two extremes are equally disowned  
By reason: if, with sharp recoil, from one  
You have been driven far as its opposite,  
Between them seek the point whereon to  
build <sup>271</sup>

Sound expectations. So doth he advise  
Who shared at first the illusion; but was  
soon

Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks  
Which Nature gently gave, in woods and  
fields;

Nor unimproved by Providence, thus speak-  
ing

To the inattentive children of the world:

‘Vainglorious Generation! what new powers  
‘On you have been conferred? what gifts,  
withheld <sup>279</sup>

‘From your progenitors, have ye received,  
‘Fit recompense of new desert? what claim  
‘Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees  
‘For you should undergo a sudden change;  
‘And the weak functions of one busy day,  
‘Reclaiming and extirpating, perform

‘What all the slowly-moving years of time,  
‘With their united force, have left undone?

‘By nature's gradual processes be taught;

‘By story be confounded! Ye aspire

‘Rashly, to fall once more; and that false  
fruit, <sup>290</sup>

‘Which, to your overweening spirits, yields  
‘Hope of a flight celestial, will produce

‘Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her  
sons

‘Shall not the less, though late, be justified.’

Such timely warning,” said the Wanderer,  
“gave

That visionary voice; and, at this day,

When a Tartarean darkness overspreads

The groaning nations; when the impious  
rule,

By will or by established ordinance,

Their own dire agents, and constrain the  
good <sup>300</sup>

To acts which they abhor; though I bewail  
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart

Prevents me not from owning, that the  
law,

By which mankind now suffers, is most  
just.

For by superior energies; most strict

Affiance in each other; faith more firm

In their unhallowed principles; the bad

Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,

The vacillating, inconsistent good.

Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait — in hope  
To see the moment, when the righteous  
cause <sup>311</sup>

Shall gain defenders zealous and devout

As they who have opposed her; in which  
Virtue

Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds

That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring

By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.

That spirit only can redeem mankind;

And when that sacred spirit shall appear,

Then shall *our* triumph be complete as  
theirs.

Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the  
wise <sup>320</sup>

Have still the keeping of their proper  
peace;

Are guardians of their own tranquillity.

They act, or they recede, observe, and  
feel;

‘Knowing the heart of man is set to be

The centre of this world, about the which

Those revolutions of disturbances



Still roll; where all the aspects of misery  
Predominate; whose strong effects are such  
As he must bear, being powerless to red-  
dress;

*And that unless above himself he can* 330  
*Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man !*

Happy is he who lives to understand,  
Not human nature only, but explores  
All natures, — to the end that he may find  
The law that governs each; and where be-  
gins

The union, the partition where, that makes  
Kind and degree, among all visible Beings;  
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,  
Which they inherit, — cannot step be-  
yond, —

And cannot fall beneath; that do assign 340  
To every class its station and its office,  
Through all the mighty commonwealth of  
things

Up from the creeping plant to sovereign  
Man.

Such converse, if directed by a meek,  
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:  
For knowledge is delight; and such delight  
Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is  
To thought and to the climbing intellect,  
It teaches less to love, than to adore;  
If that be not indeed the highest love !” 350

“ Yet,” said I, tempted here to interpose,  
“ The dignity of life is not impaired  
By aught that innocently satisfies  
The humbler cravings of the heart; and he  
Is a still happier man, who, for those heights  
Of speculation not unfit, descends;  
And such benign affections cultivates  
Among the inferior kinds; not merely those  
That he may call his own, and which de-  
pend,

As individual objects of regard, 360  
Upon his care, from whom he also looks  
For signs and tokens of a mutual bond;  
But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,  
Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.  
Nor is it a mean praise of rural life  
And solitude, that they do favour most,  
Most frequently call forth, and best sustain,  
These pure sensations; that can penetrate  
The obstreperous city; on the barren seas  
Are not unfelt; and much might recom-  
mend, 370

How much they might inspirit and endear,  
The loneliness of this sublime retreat !”

“ Yes,” said the Sage, resuming the dis-  
course

Again directed to his downcast Friend,  
“ If, with the froward will and grovelling  
soul

Of man, offended, liberty is here,  
And invitation every hour renewed,  
To mark *their* placid state, who never heard  
Of a command which they have power to  
break,

Or rule which they are tempted to trans-  
gress: 380

These, with a soothed or elevated heart,  
May we behold; their knowledge register;  
Observe their ways; and, free from envy,  
find

Complacence there: — but wherefore this to  
you ?

I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth,  
The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold  
Into a ‘ feathery bunch,’ feeds at your hand:  
A box, perchance, is from your casement  
hung

For the small wren to build in; — not in  
vain,

The barriers disregarding that surround 390  
This deep abiding place, before your sight  
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly; and  
soars,

Small creature as she is, from earth's bright  
flowers,

Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns  
In the waste wilderness: the Soul ascends  
Drawn towards her native firmament of  
heaven,

When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,  
Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,  
This shaded valley leaves; and leaves the  
dark

Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing  
A proud communication with the sun 401  
Low sunk beneath the horizon ! — List ! —  
I heard,

From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent  
forth

As if the visible mountain made the cry.  
Again !” — The effect upon the soul was  
such

As he expressed: from out the mountain's  
heart

The solemn voice appeared to issue, star-  
tling

The blank air — for the region all around  
Stood empty of all shape of life, and si-  
lent

Save for that single cry, the unanswered  
bleat

Of a poor lamb — left somewhere to itself,  
The plaintive spirit of the solitude !

He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,  
Through consciousness that silence in such  
place

Was best, the most affecting eloquence.

But soon his thoughts returned upon them-  
selves,

And, in soft tone of speech, thus he re-  
sumed.

“ Ah ! if the heart, too confidently raised,  
Perchance too lightly occupied, or lulled

Too easily, despise or overlook <sup>420</sup>

The vassalage that binds her to the earth,  
Her sad dependence upon time, and all

The trepidations of mortality,  
What place so destitute and void — but

there

The little flower her vanity shall check;  
The trailing worm reprove her thoughtless

pride ?

These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds,  
Does that benignity pervade, that warms

The mole contented with her darksome  
walk <sup>420</sup>

In the cold ground; and to the emmet gives  
Her foresight, and intelligence that makes

The tiny creatures strong by social league;  
Supports the generations, multiplies

Their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain  
Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills —

Their labour, covered, as a lake with waves;  
Thousands of cities, in the desert place

Built up of life, and food, and means of  
life !

Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,  
Creatures that in communities exist, <sup>440</sup>

Less, as might seem, for general guardian-  
ship

Or through dependence upon mutual aid,  
Than by participation of delight

And a strict love of fellowship, combined.  
What other spirit can it be that prompts

The gilded summer flies to mix and weave  
Their sports together in the solar beam,

Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy ?  
More obviously the self-same influence rules

The feathered kinds; the fieldfare's pensive  
flock, <sup>450</sup>

The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,  
Hovering above these inland solitudes,

By the rough wind unscattered, at whose  
call

Up through the trenches of the long-drawn  
vales

Their voyage was begun: nor is its power  
Unfelt among the sedentary fowl

That seek yon pool, and there prolong their  
stay

In silent congress; or together roused  
Take flight; while with their clang the air

resounds:

And, over all, in that ethereal vault, <sup>460</sup>

Is the mute company of changeful clouds;  
Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,

The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;  
The mild assemblage of the starry heavens;

And the great sun, earth's universal lord !

How bountiful is Nature ! he shall find  
Who seeks not; and to him, who hath not

asked,

Large measure shall be dealt. Three sab-  
bath-days

Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent  
Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights;

And what a marvellous and heavenly show  
Was suddenly revealed ! — the swains

moved on, <sup>472</sup>

And heeded not: you lingered, you per-  
ceived

And felt, deeply as living man could feel.  
There is a luxury in self-dispraise;

And inward self-disparagement affords  
To meditative spleen a grateful feast.

Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,  
You judge unthankfully: distempered

nerves

Infect the thoughts: the languor of the  
frame <sup>480</sup>

Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your  
couch —

Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;  
Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed

from heaven

Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye  
Look down upon your taper, through a

watch

Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling  
In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star

Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.  
Take courage, and withdraw yourself from

ways

That run not parallel to nature's course. <sup>490</sup>

Rise with the lark ! your matins shall obtain  
Grace, be their composition what it may,

If but with hers performed; climb once  
again,  
Climb every day, those ramparts; meet the  
breeze  
Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee  
That from your garden thither soars, to feed  
On new-blown heath; let yon commanding  
rock  
Be your frequented watch-tower; roll the  
stone  
In thunder down the mountains; with all  
your might  
Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red  
deer<sup>500</sup>  
Fly to those harbours, driven by hound  
and horn  
Loud echoing, add your speed to the pur-  
suit;  
So, wearied to your hut shall you return,  
And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills  
A kindling eye: — accordant feelings rushed  
Into my bosom, whence these words broke  
forth:

"Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,  
To have a body (this our vital frame  
With shrinking sensibility endued,<sup>510</sup>  
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)  
And to the elements surrender it  
As if it were a spirit! — How divine,  
The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man  
To roam at large among unpeopled glens  
And mountainous retirements, only trod  
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate  
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm  
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,  
Be as a presence or a motion — one<sup>520</sup>  
Among the many there; and while the mists  
Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes  
And phantoms from the crags and solid earth  
As fast as a musician scatters sounds  
Out of an instrument; and while the streams  
(As at a first creation and in haste  
To exercise their untried faculties)  
Descending from the region of the clouds,  
And starting from the hollows of the  
earth<sup>529</sup>  
More multitudinous every moment, rend  
Their way before them — what a joy to roam  
An equal among mightiest energies;  
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,  
Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard  
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,  
'Rage on ye elements! let moon and stars

Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn  
With this commotion (ruinous though it be)  
From day to night, from night to day, pro-  
longed!"

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from  
my lips<sup>540</sup>  
The strain of transport, "whoso'er in youth  
Has, through ambition of his soul, given  
way  
To such desires, and grasped at such de-  
light,  
Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,  
In spite of all the weakness that life brings,  
Its cares and sorrows; he, though taught to  
own  
The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake,  
Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness —  
Loving the sports which once he gloried  
in.

Compatriot, Friend, remote are Garry's  
hills,<sup>550</sup>  
The streams far distant of your native glen;  
Yet is their form and image here expressed  
With brotherly resemblance. Turn your  
steps  
Wherever fancy leads; by day, by night,  
Are various engines working, not the same  
As those with which your soul in youth was  
moved,  
But by the great Artificer endowed  
With no inferior power. You dwell alone;  
You walk, you live, you speculate alone;  
Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign  
prince,<sup>560</sup>  
For you a stately gallery maintain  
Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,  
Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed  
With no incurious eye; and books are yours,  
Within whose silent chambers treasure lies  
Preserved from age to age; more precious  
far  
Than that accumulated store of gold  
And orient gems, which, for a day of need,  
The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.  
These hoards of truth you can unlock at  
will:<sup>570</sup>  
And music waits upon your skilful touch,  
Sounds which the wandering shepherd from  
these heights  
Hears, and forgets his purpose; — furnished  
thus,  
How can you droop, if willing to be up-  
raised?

A piteous lot it were to flee from Man —  
Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose hours  
Are by domestic pleasures uncaressed  
And unenlivened; who exists whole years  
Apart from benefits received or done 579  
'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd;  
Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,  
Of the world's interests — such a one hath  
need

Of a quick fancy, and an active heart,  
That, for the day's consumption, books may  
yield

Food not unwholesome; earth and air correct  
His morbid humour, with delight supplied  
Or solace, varying as the seasons change.  
— Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her  
haunts of ease

And easy contemplation; gay parterres,  
And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades  
And shady groves in studied contrast —  
each, 591

For recreation, leading into each:  
These may he range, if willing to partake  
Their soft indulgences, and in due time  
May issue thence, recruited for the tasks  
And course of service Truth requires from  
those

Who tend her altars, wait upon her  
throne,  
And guard her fortresses. Who thinks, and  
feels,

And recognises ever and anon 599  
The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,  
Why need such man go desperately astray,  
And nurse 'the dreadful appetite of death?'  
If tired with systems, each in its degree  
Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,  
Let him build systems of his own, and smile  
At the fond work, demolished with a touch;  
If unreligious, let him be at once,  
Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled  
A pupil in the many-chambered school,  
Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.

Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's  
verge; 611

And daily lose what I desire to keep:  
Yet rather would I instantly decline  
To the traditional sympathies  
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take  
A fearful apprehension from the owl  
Or death-watch: and as readily rejoice,  
If two auspicious magpies crossed my  
way; —

To this would rather bend than see and hear

The repetitions wearisome of sense, 620  
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no  
place;

Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark  
On outward things, with formal inference  
ends;

Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils  
At once — or, not recoiling, is perplexed —  
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research;  
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the  
seat

Where peace and happy consciousness  
should dwell,

On its own axis restlessly revolving,  
Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of  
truth. 630

Upon the breast of new-created earth  
Man walked; and when and whereso'er he  
moved,

Alone or mated, solitude was not.  
He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate  
voice

Of God; and Angels to his sight appeared  
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise;  
Or through the groves gliding like morning  
mist

Enkindled by the sun. He sate — and talked  
With winged Messengers; who daily  
brought

To his small island in the ethereal deep 640  
Tidings of joy and love. — From those pure  
heights

(Whether of actual vision, sensible  
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort  
Have condescendingly been shadowed forth  
Communications spiritually maintained,  
And intuitions moral and divine)

Fell Human-kind — to banishment con-  
demned

That flowing years repealed not: and dis-  
tress

And grief spread wide; but Man escaped  
the doom

Of destitution; — solitude was not. 650  
— Jehovah — shapeless Power above all  
Powers,

Single and one, the omnipresent God,  
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,  
Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven;  
On earth, enshrined within the wandering  
ark;

Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne  
Between the Cherubim — on the chosen  
Race

Showered miracles, and ceased not to dis-  
pense

Judgments, that filled the land from age  
to age

With hope, and love, and gratitude, and  
fear; 660

And with amazement smote; — thereby to  
assert

His scorned, or unacknowledged, sover-  
eignty.

And when the One, ineffable of name,  
Of nature indivisible, withdrew  
From mortal adoration or regard,  
Not then was Deity engulfed; nor Man,  
The rational creature, left, to feel the  
weight

Of his own reason, without sense or thought  
Of higher reason and a purer will,  
To benefit and bless, through mightier  
power; — 670

Whether the Persian — zealous to reject  
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls  
And roofs of temples built by human  
hands —

To loftiest heights ascending, from their  
tops,

With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,  
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,  
And to the winds and mother elements,  
And the whole circle of the heavens, for  
him

A sensitive existence, and a God,  
With lifted hands invoked, and songs of  
praise: 680

Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense  
Yielding his soul, and Babylonian framed  
For influence undefined a personal shape;  
And, from the plain, with toil immense,  
upreared

Tower eight times planted on the top of  
tower,

That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch  
Descending, there might rest; upon that  
height

Pure and serene, diffused — to overlook  
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast  
Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,  
With grove and field and garden inter-  
sprersed; 691

Their town, and foodful region for support  
Against the pressure of beleaguering war.

Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless  
fields,  
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies

Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,  
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide  
And guardian of their course, that never  
closed

His steadfast eye. The planetary Five  
With a submissive reverence they beheld;  
Watched, from the centre of their sleeping  
flocks, 701

Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to  
move

Carrying through ether, in perpetual round,  
Decrees and resolutions of the Gods;  
And, by their aspects, signifying works  
Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.

— The imaginative faculty was lord  
Of observations natural; and, thus  
Led on, those shepherds made report of  
stars

In set rotation passing to and fro, 710  
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere  
And its invisible counterpart, adorned  
With answering constellations, under earth,  
Removed from all approach of living sight  
But present to the dead; who, so they  
deemed,

Like those celestial messengers beheld  
All accidents, and judges were of all.

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,  
Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding  
shores, —

Under a cope of sky more variable, 720  
Could find commodious place for every God,  
Promptly received, as prodigally brought,  
From the surrounding countries, at the  
choice

Of all adventurers. With unrivalled skill,  
As nicest observation furnished hints  
For studious fancy, his quick hand bestowed  
On fluent operations a fixed shape;  
Metal or stone, idolatrously served.

And yet — triumphant o'er this pompous  
show

Of art, this palpable array of sense, 730  
On every side encountered; in despite  
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets  
By wandering Rhapsodists; and in contempt  
Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged  
Amid the wrangling schools — a SPIRIT  
hung,

Beautiful region ! o'er thy towns and farms,  
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;  
And emanations were perceived; and acts  
Of immortality, in Nature's course, 739  
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt

As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed  
And armed warrior; and in every grove  
A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,  
When piety more awful had relaxed.  
— 'Take, running river, take these locks of  
mine' —

Thus would the Votary say — 'this severed  
hair,

'My vow fulfilling, do I here present,

'Thankful for my beloved child's return.

'Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,

'Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the crystal  
lymph <sup>750</sup>

'With which thou dost refresh the thirsty  
lip,

'And, all day long, moisten these flowery  
fields !'

And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair  
was shed

Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose  
Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired;  
That hath been, is, and where it was and is  
There shall endure, — existence unexposed  
To the blind walk of mortal accident;  
From diminution safe and weakening age;  
While man grows old, and dwindles, and  
decays; <sup>760</sup>

And countless generations of mankind  
Depart; and leave no vestige where they  
trod.

We live by Admiration, Hope and Love;  
And, even as these are well and wisely  
fixed,

In dignity of being we ascend.

But what is error ? " — " Answer he who  
can ! "

The Sceptic somewhat haughtily exclaimed:  
" Love, Hope, and Admiration, — are they  
not

Mad Fancy's favourite vassals ? Does not  
life

Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin, <sup>770</sup>  
Guides to destruction ? Is it well to trust  
Imagination's light when reason's fails,  
The unguarded taper where the guarded  
faints ?

— Stoop from those heights, and soberly  
declare

What error is; and, of our errors, which  
Doth most debase the mind; the genuine  
seats

Of power, where are they ? Who shall  
regulate,

With truth, the scale of intellectual rank ? "

" Methinks," persuasively the Sage re-  
plied, <sup>779</sup>

" That for this arduous office you possess  
Some rare advantages. Your early days  
A grateful recollection must supply  
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouch-  
safed

To dignify the humblest state. — Your voice  
Hath, in my hearing, often testified  
That poor men's children, they, and they  
alone,

By their condition taught, can understand  
The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks  
For daily bread. A consciousness is yours  
How feelingly religion may be learned <sup>790</sup>  
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue —  
Heard where the dwelling vibrates to the  
din

Of the contiguous torrent, gathering  
strength

At every moment — and, with strength, in-  
crease

Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,  
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,  
A sightless labourer, whistles at his work —  
Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,  
And piety is sweet to infant minds.

— The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine  
carves, <sup>800</sup>

On the green turf, a dial — to divide  
The silent hours; and who to that report  
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,  
Throughout a long and lonely summer's  
day

His round of pastoral duties, is not left  
With less intelligence for *moral* things  
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,  
Within himself, a measure and a rule,  
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,  
That shines for him, and shines for all  
mankind. <sup>810</sup>

Experience daily fixing his regards  
On nature's wants, he knows how few they  
are,

And where they lie, how answered and ap-  
peased.

This knowledge ample recompense affords  
For manifold privations; he refers  
His notions to this standard; on this rock  
Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,  
Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime  
content.

Imagination — not permitted here  
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's  
mind, <sup>820</sup>

On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,  
And trivial ostentation — is left free  
And puissant to range the solemn walks  
Of time and nature, girded by a zone  
That, while it binds, invigorates and sup-  
ports.

Acknowledge, then, that whether by the  
side

Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,  
Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred  
(Take from him what you will upon the  
score

Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes  
For noble purposes of mind: his heart <sup>831</sup>  
Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;  
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.  
And those illusions, which excite the scorn  
Or move the pity of unthinking minds,  
Are they not mainly outward ministers  
Of inward conscience? with whose service  
charged

They came and go, appeared and disappear,  
Diverting evil purposes, remorse  
Awakening, chastening an intemperate  
grief, <sup>840</sup>

Or pride of heart abating: and, whene'er  
For less important ends those phantoms  
move,

Who would forbid them, if their presence  
serve —

On thinly-peopled mountains and wild  
heaths,

Filling a space, else vacant — to exalt  
The forms of Nature, and enlarge her  
powers?

Once more to distant ages of the world  
Let us revert, and place before our  
thoughts

The face which rural solitude might wear  
To the unenlightened swains of pagan  
Greece. <sup>850</sup>

— In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman,  
stretched

On the soft grass through half a summer's  
day,

With music lulled his indolent repose:  
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,  
When his own breath was silent, chanced to  
hear

A distant strain, far sweeter than the  
sounds

Which his poor skill could make, his fancy  
fetched,

Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,

A beardless Youth, who touched a golden  
lute,  
And filled the illumined groves with ravish-  
ment. <sup>860</sup>

The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye  
Up towards the crescent moon, with grate-  
ful heart

Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed  
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:  
And hence, a beaming Goddess with her  
Nymphs,

Across the lawn and through the darksome  
grove,

Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes  
By echo multiplied from rock or cave,  
Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and  
stars

Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,  
When winds are blowing strong. The trav-  
eller slaked <sup>871</sup>

His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and  
thanked

The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills  
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,  
Might, with small help from fancy, be  
transformed

Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.  
The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, their  
wings,

Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom  
they wooed

With gentle whisper. Withered boughs  
grotesque,

Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary  
age, <sup>880</sup>

From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth  
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side;  
And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring  
horns

Of the live deer, or goat's depending  
beard, —

These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood  
Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,  
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring  
God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and I  
could mark

Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding brow  
Of our Companion, gradually diffused; <sup>890</sup>  
While listening, he had paced the noiseless  
turf,

Like one whose untired ear a murmuring  
stream

Detains; but tempted now to interpose,

He with a smile exclaimed: —

“T is well you speak  
At a safe distance from our native land,  
And from the mansions where our youth  
was taught.

The true descendants of those godly men  
Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of  
zeal,

Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles  
That harboured them, — the souls retaining  
yet 900

The churlish features of that after-race  
Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting  
rocks,

In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,  
Or what their scruples construed to be  
such —

How, think you, would they tolerate this  
scheme

Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged  
Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh  
The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain  
Uprooted; would re-consecrate our wells  
To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint Anne;  
And from long banishment recall Saint  
Giles, 911

To watch again with tutelary love  
O'er stately Edinburgh throned on crags?  
A blessed restoration, to behold  
The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,  
Once more parading through her crowded  
streets,

Now simply guarded by the sober powers  
Of science, and philosophy, and sense !”

This answer followed. — “You have  
turned my thoughts

Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose 920  
Against idolatry with warlike mind,  
And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk  
In woods, and dwell under impending rocks  
Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and food;  
Why ? — for this very reason that they felt,  
And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they  
moved,

A spiritual presence, oft-times miscon-  
ceived,

But still a high dependence, a divine  
Bounty and government, that filled their  
hearts

With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and love;  
And from their fervent lips drew hymns of  
praise, 931

That through the desert rang. Though  
favoured less,

Far less, than these, yet such, in their de-  
gree,

Were those bewildered Pagans of old time.  
Beyond their own poor natures and above  
They looked; were humbly thankful for  
the good

Which the warm sun solicited, and earth  
Bestowed; were gladsome, — and their  
moral sense

They fortified with reverence for the Gods;  
And they had hopes that overstepped the  
Grave. 940

Now, shall our great Discoverers,” he  
exclaimed,

Raising his voice triumphantly, “obtain  
From sense and reason, less than these  
obtained,

Though far misled ? Shall men for whom  
our age

Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,  
To explore the world without and world  
within,

Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious spirits —  
Whom earth, at this late season, hath  
produced

To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
The planets in the hollow of their hand;  
And they who rather dive than soar, whose  
pains 951

Have solved the elements, or analysed  
The thinking principle — shall they in fact  
Prove a degraded Race ? and what avails  
Renown, if their presumption make them  
such ?

Oh ! there is laughter at their work in  
heaven !

Inquire of ancient Wisdom; go, demand  
Of mighty Nature, if 't was ever meant  
That we should pry far off yet be un-  
raised;

That we should pore, and dwindle as we  
pore, 960

Viewing all objects unremittingly  
In disconnection dead and spiritless;  
And still dividing, and dividing still,  
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied  
With the perverse attempt, while littleness  
May yet become more little; waging thus  
An impious warfare with the very life  
Of our own souls !

And if indeed there be  
An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom  
Our dark foundations rest, could he design  
That this magnificent effect of power, 971



The earth we tread, the sky that we behold  
By day, and all the pomp which night re-  
veals;

That these — and that superior mystery  
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,  
And the dread soul within it — should exist  
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,  
Probed, vexed, and criticised? Accuse me  
not

Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,  
If, having walked with Nature threescore  
years, 980

And offered, far as frailty would allow,  
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,  
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,  
Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY  
Revolts, offended at the ways of men  
Swayed by such motives, to such ends em-  
ployed;

Philosophers, who, though the human soul  
Be of a thousand faculties composed,  
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet  
prize

This soul, and the transcendent universe,  
No more than as a mirror that reflects 991  
To proud Self-love her own intelligence;  
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss  
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly!

Nor higher place can be assigned to him  
And his compeers — the laughing Sage of  
France. —

Crowned was he, if my memory do not  
err,

With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,  
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved  
And benefits his wisdom had conferred;  
His stooping body tottered with wreaths of  
flowers 1001

Opprest, far less becoming ornaments  
Than Spring oft twines about a moulder-  
ing tree;

Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,  
And a most frivolous people. Him I mean  
Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,  
This sorry Legend; which by chance we  
found

Piled in a nook, through malice, as might  
seem,

Among more innocent rubbish." — Speak-  
ing thus,

With a brief notice when, and how, and  
where, 1010

We had espied the book, he drew it forth;  
And courteously, as if the act removed,

At once, all traces from the good Man's  
heart

Of unbeneign aversion or contempt,  
Restored it to its owner. "Gentle Friend,"  
Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,  
"You have known lights and guides better  
than these.

Ah! let not aught amiss within dispose  
A noble mind to practise on herself, 1019  
And tempt opinion to support the wrongs  
Of passion: whatsoe'er be felt or feared,  
From higher judgment-seats make no ap-  
peal

To lower: can you question that the soul  
Inherits an allegiance, not by choice  
To be cast off, upon an oath proposed  
By each new upstart notion? In the ports  
Of levity no refuge can be found,  
No shelter, for a spirit in distress.  
He, who by wilful disesteem of life  
And proud insensibility to hope, 1030  
Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn  
That her mild nature can be terrible;  
That neither she nor Silence lack the power  
To avenge their own insulted majesty.

O blest seclusion! when the mind admits  
The law of duty; and can therefore move  
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
Linked in entire complacence with her  
choice;

When youth's presumptuousness is mellowed  
down,

And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed; 1040  
When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,  
Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung  
In sober plenty; when the spirit stoops

To drink with gratitude the crystal stream  
Of unreprieved enjoyment; and is pleased  
To muse, and be saluted by the air  
Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower  
scents

From out the crumbling ruins of fallen  
pride

And chambers of transgression, now for-  
lorn.

O, calm contented days, and peaceful  
nights! 1050

Who, when such good can be obtained,  
would strive

To reconcile his manhood to a couch  
Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,  
Stuffed with the thorny substance of the  
past

For fixed annoyance; and full oft beset

With floating dreams, black and disconsolate,  
The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

Within the soul a faculty abides, <sup>1058</sup>  
That with interpositions, which would hide  
And darken, so can deal that they become  
Contingencies of pomp; and serve to exalt  
Her native brightness. As the ample moon,  
In the deep stillness of a summer even  
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,  
Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,  
In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides  
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil  
Into a substance glorious as her own,  
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power  
Capacious and serene. Like power abides  
In man's celestial spirit; virtue thus <sup>1071</sup>  
Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds  
A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,  
From the encumbrances of mortal life,  
From error, disappointment — nay, from  
guilt;  
And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
From palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was touched  
With manifest emotion, and exclaimed;  
"But how begin? and whence? — 'The  
Mind is free — <sup>1080</sup>

Resolve,' the haughty Moralist would say,  
'This single act is all that we demand.'  
Alas! such wisdom bids a creature fly  
Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn  
His natural wings! — To friendship let  
him turn

For succour; but perhaps he sits alone  
On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat  
That holds but him, and can contain no  
more!

Religion tells of amity sublime  
Which no condition can preclude; of One  
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all  
wants, <sup>1091</sup>

All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs:  
But is that bounty absolute? — His gifts,  
Are they not, still, in some degree, rewards  
For acts of service? Can his love extend  
To hearts that own not him? Will showers  
of grace,

When in the sky no promise may be seen,  
Fall to refresh a parched and withered  
land?

Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load  
At the Redeemer's feet?"

In rueful tone,  
With some impatience in his mien, he spake:  
Back to my mind rushed all that had been  
urged <sup>1102</sup>

To calm the Sufferer when his story closed;  
I looked for counsel as unbending now;  
But a discriminating sympathy  
Stooped to this apt reply: —

"As men from men  
Do, in the constitution of their souls,  
Differ, by mystery not to be explained;  
And as we fall by various ways, and sink  
One deeper than another, self-condemned,  
Through manifold degrees of guilt and  
shame; <sup>1111</sup>

So manifold and various are the ways  
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps  
Of all infirmity, and tending all  
To the same point, attainable by all —  
Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.  
For you, assuredly, a hopeful road  
Lies open: we have heard from you a voice  
At every moment softened in its course  
By tenderness of heart; have seen your  
eye, <sup>1120</sup>

Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,  
Kindle before us. — Your discourse this day,  
That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to flow  
In creeping sadness, through oblivious  
shades

Of death and night, has caught at every  
turn

The colours of the sun. Access for you  
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,  
Which the imaginative Will upholds  
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached  
By the inferior Faculty that moulds, <sup>1130</sup>  
With her minute and speculative pains,  
Opinion, ever changing!

I have seen  
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;  
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
Listened intensely; and his countenance  
soon

Brightened with joy; for from within were  
heard

Murmurings, whereby the monitor ex-  
pressed

Mysterious union with its native sea. <sup>1140</sup>  
Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things;

Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;  
 And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
 Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
 Adore, and worship, when you know it not;  
 Pious beyond the intention of your thought;  
 Devout above the meaning of your will. <sup>1150</sup>  
 — Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to  
 feel.

The estate of man would be indeed forlorn

If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
 Made the eye blind, and closed the passages  
 Through which the ear converses with the  
 heart.

Has not the soul, the being of your life,  
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
 In some calm season, when these lofty rocks  
 At night's approach bring down the un-  
 clouded sky,

To rest upon their circumambient walls;  
 A temple framing of dimensions vast, <sup>1161</sup>  
 And yet not too enormous for the sound  
 Of human anthems, — choral song, or burst  
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
 To glorify the Eternal! What if these  
 Did never break the stillness that prevails  
 Here, — if the solemn nightingale be  
 mute,

And the soft woodlark here did never chant  
 Her vespers, — Nature fails not to provide  
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering  
 air <sup>1170</sup>

Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,  
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;  
 The little rills, and waters numberless,  
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes  
 With the loud streams: and often, at the  
 hour

When issue forth the first pale stars, is  
 heard,

Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
 One voice — the solitary raven, flying  
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,  
 Unseen, perchance above all power of  
 sight — <sup>1180</sup>

An iron knell! with echoes from afar  
 Faint — and still fainter — as the cry, with  
 which

The wanderer accompanies her flight  
 Through the calm region, fades upon the  
 ear,

Diminishing by distance till it seemed  
 To expire; yet from the abyss is caught  
 again,

And yet again recovered!

But descending  
 From these imaginative heights, that yield  
 Far-stretching views into eternity,  
 Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler  
 power <sup>1190</sup>

Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend  
 Even here, where her amenities are sown  
 With sparing hand. Then trust yourself  
 abroad

To range her blooming bowers, and spa-  
 cious fields,

Where on the labours of the happy throng  
 She smiles, including in her wide embrace  
 City, and town, and tower, — and sea with  
 ships

Sprinkled; — be our Companion while we  
 track

Her rivers populous with gliding life;  
 While, free as air, o'er printless sands we  
 march, <sup>1200</sup>

Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods;  
 Roaming, or resting under grateful shade  
 In peace and meditative cheerfulness;  
 Where living things, and things inanimate,  
 Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye  
 and ear,

And speak to social reason's inner sense,  
 With articulate language.

For, the Man —  
 Who, in this spirit, communes with the  
 Forms

Of nature, who with understanding heart  
 Both knows and loves such objects as excite  
 No morbid passions, no disquietude, <sup>1211</sup>  
 No vengeance, and no hatred — needs must  
 feel

The joy of that pure principle of love  
 So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught  
 Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose  
 But seek for objects of a kindred love  
 In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.

Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
 His feelings of aversion softened down;  
 A holy tenderness pervade his frame. <sup>1220</sup>  
 His sanity of reason not impaired,  
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing  
 clear,

From a clear fountain flowing, he looks  
 round

And seeks for good; and finds the good he  
 seeks:

Until abhorrence and contempt are things  
 He only knows by name; and, if he hear,  
 From other mouths, the language which  
 they speak,

He is compassionate; and has no thought,  
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further; by contemplating these  
Forms 1230

In the relations which they bear to man,  
He shall discern, how, through the various  
means

Which silently they yield, are multiplied  
The spiritual presences of absent things.  
Trust me, that for the instructed, time will  
come

When they shall meet no object but may  
teach

Some acceptable lesson to their minds  
Of human suffering, or of human joy.  
So shall they learn, while all things speak  
of man,

Their duties from all forms; and general  
laws, 1240

And local accidents, shall tend alike  
To rouse, to urge; and, with the will,  
confer

The ability to spread the blessings wide  
Of true philanthropy. The light of love  
Not failing, perseverance from their steps  
Departing not, for them shall be con-  
firmed

The glorious habit by which sense is made  
Subservient still to moral purposes,  
Auxiliar to divine. That change shall  
clothe

The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore 1250  
The burthen of existence. Science then  
Shall be a precious visitant; and then,  
And only then, be worthy of her name:  
For then her heart shall kindle; her dull  
eye,

Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang  
Chained to its object in brute slavery;  
But taught with patient interest to watch  
The processes of things, and serve the cause  
Of order and distinctness, not for this  
Shall it forget that its most noble use, 1260  
Its most illustrious province, must be found  
In furnishing clear guidance, a support  
Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive*  
power.

— So build we up the Being that we are;  
Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things  
We shall be wise perforce; and, while in-  
spired

By choice, and conscious that the Will is  
free,  
Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled

By strict necessity, along the path 1269  
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see,  
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine;  
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,  
Earthly desires; and raise, to loftier heights  
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the Sage that eloquent ha-  
rangue,  
Poured forth with fervour in continuous  
stream,

Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,  
An Indian Chief discharges from his breast  
Into the hearing of assembled tribes, 1279  
In open circle seated round, and hushed  
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf  
Stirs in the mighty woods. — So did he  
speak:

The words he uttered shall not pass away  
Dispersed, like music that the wind takes up  
By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgotten;  
No — they sank into me, the bounteous gift  
Of one whom time and nature had made  
wise,

Gracing his doctrine with authority  
Which hostile spirits silently allow;  
Of one accustomed to desires that feed 1290  
On fruitage gathered from the tree of life;  
To hopes on knowledge and experience  
built;

Of one in whom persuasion and belief  
Had ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition; whence the Soul,  
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and  
love,  
From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were  
reached,

Had yet to travel far, but unto us,  
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,  
He had become invisible, — a pomp 1301  
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread  
Over the mountain sides, in contrast bold  
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less  
Than those resplendent lights, his rich be-  
quest;

A dispensation of his evening power.  
— Adown the path that from the glen had  
led

The funeral train, the Shepherd and his  
Mate

Were seen descending: — forth to greet  
them ran

Our little Page: the rustic pair approach;

And in the Matron's countenance may be  
read <sup>1311</sup>

Plain indication that the words, which told  
How that neglected Pensioner was sent  
Before his time into a quiet grave,  
Had done to her humanity no wrong:  
But we are kindly welcomed — promptly  
served

With ostentatious zeal. — Along the floor  
Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell  
A grateful couch was spread for our repose;  
Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we lay,  
Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled  
by sound <sup>1321</sup>

Of far-off torrents charming the still night,  
And, to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,  
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

## BOOK FIFTH

### THE PASTOR

#### ARGUMENT

Farewell to the Valley — Reflections — A large and populous Vale described — The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him — Church and Monuments — The Solitary musing, and where — Roused — In the Churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind — Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to — Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life — Apology for the Rite — Inconsistency of the best men — Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind — General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth — Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive — Pastor approaches — Appeal made to him — His answer — Wanderer in sympathy with him — Suggestion that the least ambitious enquirers may be most free from error — The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these Mountains — And for what purpose — Pastor consents — Mountain cottage — Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants — Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind — Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the Churchyard — Graves of unbaptized Infants — Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence — Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived — Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

"FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one  
rude House,

And its small lot of life-supporting fields,  
And guardian rocks ! — Farewell, attractive  
seat !

To the still influx of the morning light  
Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but  
veiled

From human observation, as if yet  
Primeval forests wrapped thee round with  
dark

Impenetrable shade; once more farewell,  
Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss, <sup>9</sup>  
By Nature destined from the birth of things  
For quietness profound !"

Upon the side  
Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the vale  
Which foot of boldest stranger would at-  
tempt,  
Lingering behind my comrades, thus I  
breathed

A parting tribute to a spot that seemed  
Like the fixed centre of a troubled world.  
Again I halted with reverted eyes;  
The chain that would not slacken, was at  
length

Snapt, — and, pursuing leisurely my way,  
How vain, thought I, is it by change of place  
To seek that comfort which the mind  
denies; <sup>21</sup>

Yet trial and temptations oft are shunned  
Wisely; and by such tenure do we hold  
Frail life's possessions, that even they whose  
fate

Yields no peculiar reason of complaint  
Might, by the promise that is here, be won  
To steal from active duties, and embrace  
Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.

— Knowledge, methinks, in these disor-  
dered times,

Should be allowed a privilege to have <sup>30</sup>  
Her anchorites, like piety of old;  
Men, who, from faction sacred, and un-  
stained

By war, might, if so minded, turn aside  
Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few  
Living to God and nature, and content  
With that communion. Consecrated be  
The spots where such abide ! But happier  
still

The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope at-  
tends

That meditation and research may guide  
His privacy to principles and powers <sup>40</sup>  
Discovered or invented; or set forth,

Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,  
 In lucid order; so that, when his course  
 Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,  
 He sought not praise, and praise did overlook  
 His unobtrusive merit; but his life,  
 Sweet to himself, was exercised in good  
 That shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere<sup>49</sup>  
 Accompanied these musings; fervent thanks  
 For my own peaceful lot and happy choice;  
 A choice that from the passions of the world

Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat;  
 Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,  
 Secluded, but not buried; and with song  
 Cheering my days, and with industrious thought;

With the ever-welcome company of books;  
 With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,  
 And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,<sup>60</sup>  
 Following the rugged road, by sledge or wheel

Worn in the moorland, till I overtook  
 My two Associates, in the morning sunshine  
 Halting together on a rocky knoll,  
 Whence the bare road descended rapidly  
 To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his hand  
 In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old Man said,

"The fragrant air its coolness still retains;  
 The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop  
 The dewy grass; you cannot leave us now,<sup>71</sup>  
 We must not part at this inviting hour." He yielded, though reluctant; for his mind  
 Instinctively disposed him to retire  
 To his own covert; as a billow, heaved  
 Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.  
 —So we descend: and winding round a rock

Attain a point that showed the valley — stretched

In length before us; and, not distant far,  
 Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower,  
 Whose battlements were screened by tufted trees.<sup>81</sup>

And towards a crystal Mere, that lay beyond

Among steep hills and woods embosomed,  
 flowed

A copious stream with boldly-winding course;

Here traceable, there hidden — there again  
 To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.  
 On the stream's bank, and everywhere, appeared

Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots;  
 Some scattered o'er the level, others perched  
 On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,<sup>90</sup>  
 Now in its morning purity arrayed.

"As 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,"

Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power,  
 Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,  
 Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth,  
 A popular equality reigns here,  
 Save for yon stately House beneath whose roof

A rural lord might dwell." — "No feudal pomp,

Or power," replied the Wanderer, "to that House

Belongs, but there in his allotted Home<sup>100</sup>  
 Abides, from year to year, a genuine Priest,

The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king  
 Is styled, when most affectionately praised,  
 The father of his people. Such is he;  
 And rich and poor, and young and old,  
 rejoice

Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouchsafed

To me some portion of a kind regard;  
 And something also of his inner mind  
 Hath he imparted — but I speak of him  
 As he is known to all.

The calm delights  
 Of unambitious piety he chose,<sup>111</sup>  
 And learning's solid dignity; though born  
 Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.

Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew  
 From academic bowers. He loved the spot —  
 Who does not love his native soil? — he prized

The ancient rural character, composed  
 Of simple manners, feelings unsuppressed  
 And undisguised, and strong and serious thought,

A character reflected in himself,<sup>120</sup>  
 With such embellishment as well be-  
 seems

His rank and sacred function. This deep  
vale

Winds far in reaches hidden from our sight,  
And one a turreted manorial hall  
Adorns, in which the good Man's ancestors  
Have dwelt through ages, Patrons of this  
Cure.

To them, and to his own judicious pains,  
The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole do-  
main,

Owes that presiding aspect which might  
well

Attract your notice; statelier than could else  
Have been bestowed, through course of  
common chance,

On an unwealthy mountain Benefice." 131

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our  
way;

Nor reached the village-churchyard till the  
sun

Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had  
risen

Above the summits of the highest hills,  
And round our path darted oppressive  
beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred  
Pile

Stood open; and we entered. On my  
frame,

At such transition from the fervid air, 140  
A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to  
strike

The heart, in concert with that temperate  
awe

And natural reverence which the place in-  
spired.

Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,  
But large and massy; for duration built;  
With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld  
By naked rafters intricately crossed,  
Like leafless underboughs, in some thick  
wood,

All withered by the depth of shade above.  
Admonitory texts inscribed the walls, 150  
Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed;  
Each also crowned with winged heads — a  
pair

Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor  
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,  
Was occupied by oaken benches ranged  
In seemly rows; the chancel only showed  
Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly  
state

By immemorial privilege allowed;  
Though with the Encincture's special  
sanctity

But ill according. An heraldic shield, 160  
Varying its tincture with the changeful  
light,

Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft  
A faded hatchment hung, and one by time  
Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew  
Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery  
lined;

And marble monuments were here displayed  
Thronging the walls; and on the floor be-  
neath

Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems  
graven

And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with  
small

And shining effigies of brass inlaid. 170

The tribute by these various records  
claimed,

Duly we paid, each after each, and read  
The ordinary chronicle of birth,  
Office, alliance, and promotion — all  
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,  
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-  
church,

And uncorrupted senators, alike  
To king and people true. A brazen plate,  
Not easily deciphered, told of one  
Whose course of earthly honour was begun  
In quality of page among the train 181  
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the  
seas

His royal state to show, and prove his  
strength

In tournament, upon the fields of France.  
Another tablet registered the death,  
And praised the gallant bearing, of a Knight  
Tried in the sea-fights of the second  
Charles.

Near this brave Knight his Father lay en-  
tomb'd;

And, to the silent language giving voice,  
I read, — how in his manhood's earlier day  
He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war 191  
And rightful government subverted, found  
One only solace — that he had espoused  
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved  
For her benign perfections; and yet more  
Endeared to him, for this, that, in her state  
Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's  
regard,

She with a numerous issue filled his house,

Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the  
storm  
That laid their country waste. No need to  
speak 200

Of less particular notices assigned  
To Youth or Maiden gone before their time,  
And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;  
Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed  
In modest panegyric.

“These dim lines,  
What would they tell?” said I, — but, from  
the task

Of puzzling out that faded narrative,  
With whisper soft my venerable Friend  
Called me; and, looking down the dark-  
some aisle,

I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale 210  
Standing apart; with curved arm re-  
clined

On the baptismal font; his pallid face  
Upturned, as if his mind were rapt, or lost  
In some abstraction; — gracefully he stood,  
The semblance bearing of a sculptured form  
That leans upon a monumental urn  
In peace, from morn to night, from year to  
year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton  
rouse;

Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,  
Continuation haply of the notes 220  
That had beguiled the work from which he  
came,

With spade and mattock o’er his shoulder  
hung;

To be deposited, for future need,  
In their appointed place. The pale Recluse  
Withdrew; and straight we followed, — to  
a spot

Where sun and shade were intermixed; for  
there

A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms  
From an adjoining pasture, overhung  
Small space of that green churchyard with  
a light

And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown  
wall 230

My ancient Friend and I together took  
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,  
Standing before us: —

“Did you note the mien  
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,  
Death’s hireling, who scoops out his neigh-  
bour’s grave,  
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,

All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,  
Or plant a tree? And did you hear his  
voice?

I was abruptly summoned by the sound  
From some affecting images and thoughts,  
Which then were silent; but crave utter-  
ance now. 241

Much,” he continued, with dejected look,  
“Much, yesterday, was said in glowing  
phrase,

Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes  
For future states of being; and the wings  
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,  
Hovered above our destiny on earth:

But stoop, and place the prospect of the  
soul

In sober contrast with reality,  
And man’s substantial life. If this mute  
earth 250

Of what it holds could speak, and every  
grave

Were as a volume, shut, yet capable  
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,  
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and  
shame,

To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how  
ill

That which is done accords with what is  
known

To reason, and by conscience is enjoined;  
How idly, how perversely, life’s whole  
course,

To this conclusion, deviates from the line,  
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all  
At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe 261  
Not long accustomed to this breathing  
world;

One that hath barely learned to shape a  
smile,

Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp  
With tiny finger — to let fall a tear;  
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,  
To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might  
seem,

The outward functions of intelligent man;  
A grave proficient in amusive feats

Of puppetry, that from the lap declare 270  
His expectations, and announce his claims

To that inheritance which millions rue  
That they were ever born to! In due time

A day of solemn ceremonial comes;  
When they, who for this Minor hold in

trust



Rights that transcend the loftiest heritage  
Of mere humanity, present their Charge,  
For this occasion daintily adorned,  
At the baptismal font. And when the pure  
And consecrating element hath cleansed  
The original stain, the child is there re-  
ceived

Into the second ark, Christ's church, with  
trust

That he, from wrath redeemed, therein  
shall float

Over the billows of this troublesome world  
To the fair land of everlasting life.

Corrupt affections, covetous desires,  
Are all renounced; high as the thought of  
man

Can carry virtue, virtue is professed;  
A dedication made, a promise given  
For due provision to control and guide, 290  
And unremitting progress to ensure  
In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"

Here interposing fervently I said,  
"Rites which attest that Man by nature lies  
Bedded for good and evil in a gulf  
Fearfully low; nor will your judgment scorn  
Those services, whereby attempt is made  
To lift the creature toward that eminence  
On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty  
He stood; or if not so, whose top serene  
At least he feels 't is given him to de-  
sery; 301

Not without aspirations, evermore  
Returning, and injunctions from within  
Doubt to cast off and weariness; in trust  
That what the Soul perceives, if glory lost,  
May be, through pains and persevering  
hope,

Recovered; or, if hitherto unknown,  
Lies within reach, and one day shall be  
gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answered  
— "no;

The outward ritual and established forms  
With which communities of men invest 311  
These inward feelings, and the aspiring vows  
To which the lips give public utterance  
Are both a natural process; and by me  
Shall pass uncensured; though the issue  
prove,

Bringing from age to age its own reproach,  
Incongruous, impotent, and blank. — But,  
oh!

If to be weak is to be wretched — miserable,

As the lost Angel by a human voice  
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my  
mind, 320

Far better not to move at all than move  
By impulse sent from such illusive power, —  
That finds and cannot fasten down; that  
grasps

And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps;  
That tempts, emboldens — for a time sus-  
tains,

And then betrays; accuses and inflicts  
Remorseless punishment; and so retreads  
The inevitable circle: better far  
Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless  
peace,  
By foresight or remembrance, undisturbed!

Philosophy! and thou more vaunted  
name 331

Religion! with thy statelier retinue,  
Faith, Hope, and Charity — from the visible  
world

Choose for your emblems whatsoe'er ye find  
Of safest guidance or of firmest trust —  
The torch, the star, the anchor; nor except  
The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet  
The generations of mankind have knelt  
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,  
And through that conflict seeking rest — of  
you, 340

High-titled Powers, am I constrained to  
ask,

Here standing, with the unvoyageable sky  
In faint reflection of infinitude  
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive feet  
A subterraneous magazine of bones,  
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be  
laid,

Where are your triumphs? your dominion  
where?

And in what age admitted and confirmed?  
— Not for a happy land do I enquire,  
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few  
Who, with obedience willing and sincere, 351  
To your serene authorities conform;  
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,  
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked  
ways,

Inspired, and thoroughly fortified? — If the  
heart

Could be inspected to its inmost folds  
By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,  
Who shall be named — in the resplendent  
line

Of sages, martyrs, confessors — the man

Whom the best might of faith, wherever  
fixed, 360  
For one day's little compass, has pre-  
served  
From painful and discreditable shocks  
Of contradiction, from some vague desire  
Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse  
To some unsanctioned fear?"

"If this be so,  
And Man," said I, "be in his noblest shape  
Thus pitifully infirm; then, he who made,  
And who shall judge the creature, will for-  
give.

— Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint  
Is all too true; and surely not misplaced:  
For, from this pregnant spot of ground,  
such thoughts 371

Rise to the notice of a serious mind  
By natural exhalation. With the dead  
In their repose, the living in their mirth,  
Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round  
Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,  
By which, on Christian lands, from age to  
age

Profession mocks performance. Earth is  
sick,

And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words  
Which States and Kingdoms utter when  
they talk 380

Of truth and justice. Turn to private life  
And social neighbourhood; look we to our-  
selves;

A light of duty shines on every day  
For all; and yet how few are warmed or  
cheered!

How few who mingle with their fellow-men  
And still remain self-governed, and apart,  
Like this our honoured Friend; and thence  
acquire

Right to expect his vigorous decline,  
That promises to the end a blest old age!"

"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus  
exclaimed 390

The Solitary, "in the life of man,  
If to the poetry of common speech  
Faith may be given, we see as in a glass  
A true reflection of the circling year,  
With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is  
there,

In spite of many a rough untoward blast,  
Hopeful and promising with buds and  
flowers;

Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich  
day,

That ought to follow faithfully expressed?  
And mellow Autumn, charged with boun-  
teous fruit, 400

Where is she imaged? in what favoured  
clime

Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?  
— Yet, while the better part is missed, the  
worse

In man's autumnal season is set forth  
With a resemblance not to be denied,  
And that contents him; bowers that hear  
no more

The voice of gladness, less and less supply  
Of outward sunshine and internal warmth;  
And, with this change, sharp air and falling  
leaves,

Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

How gay the habitations that bedeck 411  
This fertile valley! Not a house but seems  
To give assurance of content within;  
Embosomed happiness, and placid love;  
As if the sunshine of the day were met  
With answering brightness in the hearts of  
all

Who walk this favoured ground. But  
chance-regards,

And notice forced upon incurious ears;  
These, if these only, acting in despite  
Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced  
On humble life, forbid the judging mind 421  
To trust the smiling aspect of this fair  
And noiseless commonwealth. The simple  
race

Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed  
From foul temptations, and by constant  
care

Of a good shepherd tended as themselves  
Do tend their flocks) partake man's general  
lot

With little mitigation. They escape,  
Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt; feel  
not

The tedium of fantastic idleness: 430  
Yet life, as with the multitude, with them  
Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;  
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,  
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,  
And pleasant interests — for the sequel  
leaving

Old things repeated with diminished grace;  
And all the laboured novelties at best  
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power  
Evince the want and weakness whence they  
spring."

While in this serious mood we held discourse,  
The reverend Pastor toward the churchyard gate

Approached; and, with a mild respectful air  
Of native cordiality, our Friend  
Advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien

Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed.  
Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess  
That he, who now upon the mossy wall  
Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish  
Could have transferred him to the flying clouds,

Or the least penetrable hiding-place  
In his own valley's rocky guardianship.  
— For me, I looked upon the pair, well pleased:

Nature had framed them both, and both  
were marked

By circumstance, with intermixture fine  
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak  
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,  
Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,  
One might be likened: flourishing appeared,  
Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,

The other — like a stately sycamore,  
That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged; and soon  
The Pastor learned that his approach had given

A welcome interruption to discourse  
Grave, and in truth too often sad. — “Is Man

A child of hope? Do generations press  
On generations, without progress made?  
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,  
Perforce? Are we a creature in whom good

Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will  
Acknowledge reason's law? A living power

Is virtue, or no better than a name,  
Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound?  
So that the only substance which remains,  
(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run)  
Among so many shadows, are the pains  
And penalties of miserable life,  
Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust!  
— Our cogitations, this way have been drawn,

These are the points,” the Wanderer said,  
“on which  
Our inquest turns. — Accord, good Sir!  
the light

Of your experience to dispel this gloom:  
By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart  
That frets, or languishes, be stilled and cheered.”

“Our nature,” said the Priest, in mild reply,

“Angels may weigh and fathom: they perceive,

With undisturbed and unclouded spirit,  
The object as it is; but, for ourselves,  
That speculative height *we* may not reach.  
The good and evil are our own; and we  
Are that which we would contemplate from far.

Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain —  
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep —  
As virtue's self; like virtue is beset  
With snares; tried, tempted, subject to decay.

Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,  
Blind were we without these: through these alone

Are capable to notice or discern  
Or to record; we judge, but cannot be  
Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest boast,

Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man  
An effort only, and a noble aim;  
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,  
Still to be courted — never to be won.  
— Look forth, or each man dive into himself;

What sees he but a creature too perturbed;  
That is transported to excess; that yearns,  
Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much;  
Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils;  
Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair?  
Thus comprehension fails, and truth is missed;

Thus darkness and delusion round our path  
Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury lurks  
Within the very faculty of sight.

Yet for the general purposes of faith  
In Providence, for solace and support,  
We may not doubt that who can best sub-  
ject

The will to reason's law, can strictliest live  
And act in that obedience, he shall gain

The clearest apprehension of those truths,  
Which unassisted reason's utmost power 521  
Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,  
And our regards confining within bounds  
Of less exalted consciousness, through  
which

The very multitude are free to range,  
We safely may affirm that human life  
Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene  
Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,  
Or a forbidden tract of cheerless view;  
Even as the same is looked at, or ap-  
proached. 530

Thus, when in changeful April fields are  
white

With new-fallen snow, if from the sullen  
north

Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun  
Hath gained his noontide height, this  
churchyard, filled

With mounds transversely lying side by  
side

From east to west, before you will appear  
An unilluminated, blank, and dreary plain,  
With more than wintry cheerlessness and  
gloom

Saddening the heart. Go forward, and  
look back;

Look, from the quarter whence the lord of  
light, 540

Of life, of love, and gladness doth dispense  
His beams; which, unexcluded in their fall,  
Upon the southern side of every grave  
Have gently exercised a melting power;  
Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye,  
All fresh and beautiful, and green and  
bright,

Hopeful and cheerful:—vanished is the pall  
That overspread and chilled the sacred turf,  
Vanished or hidden; and the whole domain,  
To some, too lightly minded, might appear  
A meadow carpet for the dancing hours. 551  
— This contrast, not unsuitable to life,  
Is to that other state more opposite,  
Death and its two-fold aspect! wintry —  
one,

Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut  
out;

The other, which the ray divine hath  
touched,

Replete with vivid promise, bright as  
spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wan-  
derer thus

With a complacent animation spake,  
"And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's  
repose 560

On evidence is not to be ensured  
By act of naked reason. Moral truth  
Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;  
And which, once built, retains a stedfast  
shape

And undisturbed proportions; but a thing  
Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;  
And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,  
Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose  
head

Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sin-  
cere

I re-salute these sentiments confirmed 570  
By your authority. But how acquire

The inward principle that gives effect  
To outward argument; the passive will  
Meek to admit; the active energy,  
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm  
To keep and cherish? how shall man unite  
With self-forgetting tenderness of heart  
An earth-despising dignity of soul?  
Wise in that union, and without it blind!"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not ob-  
tain 580

The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright;  
This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you  
Declared at large; and by what exercise  
From visible nature, or the inner self  
Power may be trained, and renovation  
brought

To those who need the gift. But, after all,  
Is aught so certain as that man is doomed  
To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance?  
The natural roof of that dark house in  
which

His soul is pent! How little can be  
known — 590

This is the wise man's sigh; how far we  
err —

This is the good man's not unfrequent pang!  
And they perhaps err least, the lowly class  
Whom a benign necessity compels  
To follow reason's least ambitious course;  
Such do I mean who, unperplexed by  
doubt,

And unincited by a wish to look  
Into high objects farther than they may,  
Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,  
The narrow avenue of daily toil 600  
For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed

The pale Recluse — "praise to the sturdy  
plough,  
And patient spade; praise to the simple  
crook,  
And ponderous loom — resounding while it  
holds

Body and mind in one captivity;  
And let the light mechanic tool be hailed  
With honour; which, encasing by the power  
Of long companionship, the artist's hand,  
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of  
nerves,

From a too busy commerce with the heart!  
— Inglorious implements of craft and toil,  
Both ye that shape and build, and ye that  
force,

By slow solicitation, earth to yield  
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth  
With wise reluctance; you would I extol,  
Not for gross good alone which ye produce,  
But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife  
Of proofs and reasons ye preclude — in  
those

Who to your dull society are born,  
And with their humble birthright rest con-  
tent.

— Would I had ne'er renounced it!

A slight flush  
Of moral anger previously had tinged  
The old Man's cheek; but, at this closing  
turn

Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,  
"That which we feel we utter; as we think  
So have we argued; reaping for our pains  
No visible recompense. For our relief  
You," to the Pastor turning thus he spake,  
"Have kindly interposed. May I entreat  
Your further help? The mine of real life  
Dig for us; and present us, in the shape  
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains  
Fruitless as those of æry alchemists,  
Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies  
Around us a domain where you have long  
Watched both the outward course and inner  
heart:

Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts;  
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what  
man

He is who cultivates yon hanging field;  
What qualities of mind she bears, who  
comes,

For morn and evening service, with her  
pail,

To that green pasture; place before our  
sight

The family who dwell within yon house  
Fenced round with glittering laurel; or in  
that

Below, from which the curling smoke as-  
cends.

Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,  
And have the dead around us, take from  
them

Your instances; for they are both best  
known,

And by frail man most equitably judged.

Epitomise the life; pronounce, you can,

Authentic epitaphs on some of these

Who, from their lowly mansions hither  
brought,

Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our  
feet:

So, by your records, may our doubts be  
solved;

And so, not searching higher we may learn  
*To prize the breath we share with human  
kind;*

*And look upon the dust of man with awe."*

The Priest replied — "An office you im-  
pose

For which peculiar requisites are mine;  
Yet much, I feel, is wanting — else the  
task

Would be most grateful. True indeed it  
is

That they whom death has hidden from our  
sight

Are worthiest of the mind's regard; with  
these

The future cannot contradict the past:

Mortality's last exercise and proof

Is undergone; the transit made that shows

The very Soul, revealed as she departs.

Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,

Ere we descend into these silent vaults,

One picture from the living.

You behold,  
High on the breast of yon dark mountain,  
dark

With stony barrenness, a shining speck

Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower

Brush it away, or cloud pass over it;

And such it might be deemed — a sleeping  
sunbeam;

But 't is a plot of cultivated ground,

Cut off, an island in the dusky waste;

And that attractive brightness is its own.

The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt

Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones

The tiller's hand, a hermit might have  
chosen,

For opportunity presented, thence  
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er  
land

And ocean, and look down upon the works,  
The habitations, and the ways of men,  
Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells  
That ever hermit dipped his maple dish  
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon  
green fields;

And no such visionary views belong  
To those who occupy and till the ground,  
High on that mountain where they long  
have dwelt 691

A wedded pair in childless solitude.  
A house of stones collected on the spot,  
By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in  
front,

Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose  
crest

Of birch-trees waves over the chimney top;  
A rough abode — in colour, shape, and size,  
Such as in unsafe times of border-war  
Might have been wished for and contrived,  
to elude

The eye of roving plunderer — for their  
need 700

Suffices; and unshaken bears the assault  
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong South-  
west

In anger blowing from the distant sea.  
— Alone within her solitary hut;  
There, or within the compass of her fields,  
At any moment may the Dame be found,  
True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest  
And to the grove that holds it. She be-  
guiles

By intermingled work of house and field  
The summer's day, and winter's; with suc-  
cess 710

Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,  
Even at the worst, a smooth stream of con-  
tent,

Until the expected hour at which her Mate  
From the far-distant quarry's vault re-  
turns;

And by his converse crowns a silent day  
With evening cheerfulness. In powers of  
mind,

In scale of culture, few among my flock  
Hold lower rank than this sequestered pair:  
But true humility descends from heaven;  
And that best gift of heaven hath fallen on  
them; 720

Abundant recompense for every want.

— Stoop from your height, ye proud, and  
copy these !

Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can  
hear

The voice of wisdom whispering scripture  
texts

For the mind's government, or tempter's  
peace;

And recommending for their mutual need,  
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity !"

"Much was I pleased," the grey-haired  
Wanderer said,

"When to those shining fields our notice  
first

You turned; and yet more pleased have  
from your lips 730

Gathered this fair report of them who  
dwell

In that retirement; whither, by such course  
Of evil hap and good as oft awaits

A tired way-faring man, once I was brought  
While traversing alone yon mountain pass.

Dark on my road the autumnal evening fell,  
And night succeeded with unusual gloom,

So hazardous that feet and hands became  
Guides better than mine eyes — until a  
light

High in the gloom appeared, too high,  
methought, 740

For human habitation; but I longed  
To reach it, destitute of other hope.

I looked with steadiness as sailors look  
On the north star, or watch-tower's distant

lamp,  
And saw the light — now fixed — and shift-  
ing now —

Not like a dancing meteor, but in line  
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.

It is no night-fire of the naked hills,  
Thought I — some friendly covert must be  
near.

With this persuasion thitherward my steps  
I turn, and reach at last the guiding

light; 751

Joy to myself ! but to the heart of her  
Who there was standing on the open hill,

(The same kind Matron whom your tongue  
hath praised)

Alarm and disappointment ! The alarm  
Ceased, when she learned through what

mishap I came,

And by what help had gained those distant  
fields.

Drawn from her cottage, on that airy  
height,

Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,  
Or paced the ground — to guide her Hus-  
band home, 760

By that unwearied signal, kenned afar;  
An anxious duty ! which the lofty site,  
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,  
Imposes, whensoever untoward chance  
Detains him after his accustomed hour  
Till night lies black upon the ground. ' But  
come,

Come,' said the Matron, ' to our poor abode;  
Those dark rocks hide it !' Entering, I  
beheld

A blazing fire — beside a cleanly hearth  
Sate down; and to her office, with leave  
asked, 770

The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile  
Of mountain turf required the builder's  
hand

Its wasted splendour to repair, the door  
Opened, and she re-entered with glad looks,  
Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare,  
Frank conversation, made the evening's  
treat:

Need a bewildered traveller wish for more?  
But more was given; I studied as we sate  
By the bright fire, the good Man's form,  
and face

Not less than beautiful; an open brow 780  
Of undisturbed humanity; a cheek  
Suffused with something of a feminine  
hue;

Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard;  
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,  
Expression slowly varying, that evinced  
A tardy apprehension. From a fount  
Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,  
But honoured once, those features and that  
mien

May have descended, though I see them  
here.

In such a man, so gentle and subdued, 790  
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,  
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,  
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.  
This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld  
By sundry recollections of such fall  
From high to low, ascent from low to high,  
As books record, and even the careless  
mind

Cannot but notice among men and things)  
Went with me to the place of my repose.

Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of  
day, 800

I yet had risen too late to interchange  
A morning salutation with my Host,  
Gone forth already to the far-off seat  
Of his day's work. ' Three dark mid-winter  
months

Pass,' said the Matron, ' and I never see,  
Save when the sabbath brings its kind re-  
lease,

My Helpmate's face by light of day. He  
quits

His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.  
And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we  
gain the bread

For which we pray; and for the wants pro-  
vide 810

Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.  
Companions have I many; many friends,  
Dependants, comforters — my wheel, my  
fire,

All day the house-clock ticking in mine  
ear,

The cackling hen, the tender chicken  
brood,

And the wild birds that gather round my  
porch.

This honest sheep-dog's countenance I  
read;

With him can talk; nor blush to waste a  
word

On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.  
And if the blustering wind that drives the  
clouds 820

Care not for me, he lingers round my  
door,

And makes me pastime when our tempers  
suit; —

But, above all, my thoughts are my sup-  
port,

My comfort: — would that they were  
oftener fixed

On what, for guidance in the way that  
leads

To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer  
taught.

The Matron ended — nor could I forbear  
To exclaim — ' O happy ! yielding to the  
law

Of these privations, richer in the main ! —  
While thankless thousands are oppress and  
clogged 830

By ease and leisure; by the very wealth  
And pride of opportunity made poor;

While tens of thousands falter in their path,

And sink, through utter want of cheering  
light;  
For you the hours of labour do not flag;  
For you each evening hath its shining star,  
And every sabbath-day its golden sun."

"Yes!" said the Solitary with a smile  
That seemed to break from an expanding  
heart,

"The untutored bird may found, and so  
construct, 840

And with such soft materials line, her  
nest

Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,  
That the thorns wound her not; they only  
guard.

Powers not unjustly likened to those gifts  
Of happy instinct which the woodland bird  
Shares with her species, nature's grace  
sometimes

Upon the individual doth confer,  
Among her higher creatures born and  
trained

To use of reason. And, I own that, tired  
Of the ostentatious world — a swelling stage  
With empty actions and vain passions  
stuffed, 851

And from the private struggles of mankind  
Hoping far less than I could wish to hope,  
Far less than once I trusted and believed —  
I love to hear of those, who, not contending  
Nor summoned to contend for virtue's  
prize,

Miss not the humbler good at which they  
aim,

Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt  
The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn  
Into their contraries the petty plagues 860  
And hindrances with which they stand  
beset.

In early youth, among my native hills,  
I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed  
A few small crofts of stone-encumbered  
ground;

Masses of every shape and size, that lay  
Scattered about under the mouldering  
walls

Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,  
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,  
As if the moon had showered them down  
in spite.

But he repined not. Though the plough  
was scared 870

By these obstructions, 'round the shady  
stones

'A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain,  
'Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding  
dews

'And damps, through all the drougthy  
summer day

'From out their substance issuing, maintain  
'Herbage that never fails; no grass springs  
up

'So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'  
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at  
least,

The mutual aptitude of seed and soil  
That yields such kindly product. He, whose  
bed 880

Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor  
Pensioner

Brought yesterday from our sequestered  
dell

Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,  
If living now, could otherwise report  
Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired Or-  
phan —

So call him, for humanity to him  
No parent was — feelingly could have told,  
In life, in death, what solitude can breed  
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;  
Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.  
— But your compliance, Sir! with our re-  
quest 891

My words too long have hindered."

Undeterred,

Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,  
In no ungracious opposition, given  
To the confiding spirit of his own  
Experienced faith, the Reverend Pastor  
said,

Around him looking; "Where shall I be-  
gin?"

Who shall be first selected from my flock  
Gathered together in their peaceful fold?"  
He paused — and having lifted up his eyes  
To the pure heaven, he cast them down  
again 901

Upon the earth beneath his feet; and  
spake: —

"To a mysteriously-united pair  
This place is consecrate; to Death and Life,  
And to the best affections that proceed  
From their conjunction; consecrate to faith  
In him who bled for man upon the cross;  
Hallowed to revelation; and no less  
To reason's mandates: and the hopes di-  
vine

Of pure imagination; — above all,



To charity, and love, that have provided,  
 Within these precincts, a capacious bed  
 And receptacle, open to the good  
 And evil, to the just and the unjust;  
 In which they find an equal resting-place:  
 Even as the multitude of kindred brooks  
 And streams, whose murmur fills this hol-  
 low vale,

Whether their course be turbulent or  
 smooth,

Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost  
 Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake, 920  
 And end their journey in the same repose.

And blest are they who sleep; and we  
 that know,

While in a spot like this we breathe and  
 walk,

That all beneath us by the wings are cov-  
 ered

Of motherly humanity, outspread  
 And gathering all within their tender shade,  
 Though loth and slow to come! A battle-  
 field,

In stillness left when slaughter is no more,  
 With this compared, makes a strange spec-  
 tacle!

A dismal prospect yields the wild shore  
 strewn 930

With wrecks, and trod by feet of young  
 and old

Wandering about in miserable search  
 Of friends or kindred, whom the angry  
 sea

Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who  
 would think

That all the scattered subjects which com-  
 pose

Earth's melancholy vision through the space  
 Of all her climes — these wretched, these  
 depraved,

To virtue lost, insensible of peace,  
 From the delights of charity cut off,  
 To pity dead, the oppressor and the op-  
 press; 940

Tyrants who utter the destroying word,  
 And slaves who will consent to be de-  
 stroyed —

Were of one species with the sheltered few,  
 Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,  
 Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot,  
 This file of infants; some that never  
 breathed

The vital air; others, which, though al-  
 lowed

That privilege, did yet expire too soon,  
 Or with too brief a warning, to admit  
 Administration of the holy rite 950  
 That lovingly consigns the babe to the  
 arms

Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.  
 These that in trembling hope are laid apart;  
 And the besprinkled nursing, unrequired  
 Till he begins to smile upon the breast  
 That feeds him; and the tottering little-one  
 Taken from air and sunshine when the  
 rose

Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;  
 The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy; the  
 bold youth

Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid  
 Smitten while all the promises of life 960  
 Are opening round her; those of middle  
 age,

Cast down while confident in strength they  
 stand,

Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might  
 seem,

And more secure, by very weight of all  
 That, for support, rests on them; the de-  
 cayed

And burthensome; and lastly, that poor few  
 Whose light of reason is with age extinct;  
 The hopeful and the hopeless, first and  
 last,

The earliest summoned and the longest  
 spared — 970

Are here deposited, with tribute paid  
 Various, but unto each some tribute paid;  
 As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,  
 Society were touched with kind concern,  
 And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one  
 should die;'

Or, if the change demanded no regret,  
 Observed the liberating stroke — and  
 blessed.

And whence that tribute? wherefore  
 these regards?

Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man  
 (Though claiming high distinction upon  
 earth 980

As the sole spring and fountain-head of  
 tears,

His own peculiar utterance for distress  
 (Or gladness) — No," the philosophic Priest  
 Continued, " 't is not in the vital seat  
 Of feeling to produce them, without aid  
 From the pure soul, the soul sublime and  
 pure;

With her two faculties of eye and ear,  
 The one by which a creature, whom his  
     sins  
 Have rendered prone, can upward look to  
     heaven; <sup>987</sup>  
 The other that empowers him to perceive  
 The voice of Deity, on height and plain,  
 Whispering those truths in stillness, which  
     the Word,  
 To the four quarters of the winds, pro-  
     claims  
 Not without such assistance could the use  
 Of these benign observances prevail:  
 Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus  
     maintained;  
 And by the care prospective of our wise  
 Forefathers, who, to guard against the  
     shocks  
 The fluctuation and decay of things, <sup>989</sup>  
 Embodied and established these high truths  
 In solemn institutions: men convinced  
 That life is love and immortality,  
 The being one, and one the element.  
 There lies the channel, and original bed,  
 From the beginning, hollowed out and  
     scooped  
 For Man's affections — else betrayed and  
     lost,  
 And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite!  
 This is the genuine course, the aim, and end  
 Of present reason; all conclusions else  
 Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and per-  
     verse. <sup>1010</sup>  
 The faith partaking of those holy times,  
 Life, I repeat, is energy of love  
 Divine or human; exercised in pain,  
 In strife, and tribulation; and ordained,  
 If so approved and sanctified, to pass,  
 Through shades and silent rest, to endless  
     joy."

## BOOK SIXTH

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE  
MOUNTAINS

## ARGUMENT

Poet's Address to the State and Church of  
 England — The Pastor not inferior to the an-  
 cient Worthies of the Church — He begins his  
 Narratives with an instance of unrequited Love  
 — Anguish of mind subdued, and how — The  
 lonely Miner — An instance of perseverance —  
 Which leads by contrast to an example of  
 abused talents, irresolution, and weakness —

Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case,  
 asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose  
 dispositions may have led him to end his days  
 here — Pastor, in answer, gives an account of  
 the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two  
 men of opposite principles, who had encoun-  
 tered agitations in public life — The rule by  
 which Peace may be obtained expressed, and  
 where — Solitary hints at an overpowering Fa-  
 tality — Answer of the Pastor — What subjects  
 he will exclude from his Narratives — Conversa-  
 tion upon this — Instance of an unamiable char-  
 acter, a Female, and why given — Contrasted  
 with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and  
 betrayed love — Instance of heavier guilt, and  
 its consequences to the Offender — With this  
 instance of a Marriage Contract broken is con-  
 trasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faith-  
 ful affection towards his deceased wife by his  
 care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped —  
     to gird  
 An English Sovereign's brow! and to the  
     throne  
 Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations  
     lie  
 In veneration and the people's love;  
 Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.  
 — Hail to the State of England! And con-  
     join  
 With this a salutation as devout,  
 Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church;  
 Founded in truth; by blood of Martyrdom  
 Cemented; by the hands of Wisdom  
     reared <sup>10</sup>  
 In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,  
 Decent and unreprieved. The voice, that  
     greet's  
 The majesty of both, shall pray for both;  
 That, mutually protected and sustained,  
 They may endure long as the sea surrounds  
 This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her  
     soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious  
     plains  
 Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-  
     towers,  
 And spires whose 'silent finger points to  
     heaven;' <sup>20</sup>  
 Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk  
 Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud  
 Of the dense air, which town or city breeds  
 To intercept the sun's glad beams — may  
     ne'er  
 That true succession fail of English hearts,

Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive  
 What in those holy structures ye possess  
 Of ornamental interest, and the charm  
 Of pious sentiment diffused afar,  
 And human charity, and social love.  
 — Thus never shall the indignities of time  
 Approach their reverend graces, unop-  
     posed; 31  
 Nor shall the elements be free to hurt  
 Their fair proportions; nor the blinder rage  
 Of bigot zeal madly to overturn;  
 And, if the desolating hand of war  
 Spare them, they shall continue to bestow  
 Upon the thronged abodes of busy men  
 (Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind  
 Exclusively with transitory things)  
 An air and mien of dignified pursuit; 40  
 Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land  
 Such hope, entreats that servants may  
     abound

Of those pure altars worthy; ministers  
 Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain  
 Superior, insusceptible of pride,  
 And by ambitious longings undisturbed;  
 Men, whose delight is where their duty  
     leads

Or fixes them; whose least distinguished  
     day

Shines with some portion of that heavenly  
     lustre 50

Which makes the sabbath lovely in the  
     sight

Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.

— And, as on earth it is the doom of truth  
 To be perpetually attacked by foes  
 Open or covert, be that priesthood still,  
 For her defence, replenished with a band  
 Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts  
 Thoroughly disciplined; nor (if in course  
 Of the revolving world's disturbances  
 Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven  
     avert! 60

To meet such trial) from their spiritual  
     sires

Degenerate; who, constrained to wield the  
     sword

Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed  
 With hostile din, and combating in sight  
 Of angry umpires, partial and unjust;  
 And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in  
     fire,

So to declare the conscience satisfied:  
 Nor for their bodies would accept release;

But, blessing God and praising him, be-  
     queathed

With their last breath, from out the smoul-  
     dering flame, 70

The faith which they by diligence had  
     earned,

Or, through illuminating grace, received,  
 For their dear countrymen, and all man-  
     kind.

O high example, constancy divine!

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal  
 And from the sanctity of elder times  
 Not deviating, — a priest, the like of whom  
 If multiplied, and in their stations set,  
 Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land 79  
 Spread true religion and her genuine fruits)  
 Before me stood that day; on holy ground  
 Fraught with the relics of mortality,  
 Exalting tender themes, by just degrees  
 To lofty raised; and to the highest, last;  
 The head and mighty paramount of  
     truths, —

Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,  
 For mortal creatures, conquered and se-  
     cured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith  
 Announced, as a preparatory act 89  
 Of reverence done to the spirit of the place,  
 The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground;  
 Not, as before, like one oppressed with awe  
 But with a mild and social cheerfulness;  
 Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

“At morn or eve, in your retired domain,  
 Perchance you not unfrequently have  
     marked

A Visitor — in quest of herbs and flowers;  
 Too delicate employ, as would appear,  
 For one, who, though of drooping mien, had  
     yet

From nature's kindness received a frame  
 Robust as ever rural labour bred.” 101

The Solitary answered: “Such a Form  
 Full well I recollect. We often crossed  
 Each other's path; but, as the Intruder  
     seemed

Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,  
 And as I willingly did cherish mine,  
 We met, and passed, like shadows. I have  
     heard,

From my good Host, that being crazed in  
     brain

By unrequited love, he scaled the rocks,  
Dived into caves, and pierced the matted  
woods, <sup>110</sup>  
In hope to find some virtuous herb of  
power

To cure his malady ! ”

The Vicar smiled, —  
“ Alas ! before to-morrow’s sun goes down  
His habitation will be here: for him  
That open grave is destined.”

“ Died he then  
Of pain and grief ? ” the Solitary asked,  
“ Do not believe it; never could that be ! ”

“ He loved,” the Vicar answered, “ deeply  
loved,

Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and dared  
At length to tell his love, but sued in  
vain; <sup>120</sup>

Rejected, yea repelled; and, if with scorn  
Upon the haughty maiden’s brow, ’tis but  
A high-prized plume which female Beauty  
wears

In wantonness of conquest, or puts on  
To cheat the world, or from herself to hide  
Humiliation, when no longer free.

That he could brook, and glory in; — but  
when

The tidings came that she whom he had  
wooed

Was wedded to another, and his heart  
Was forced to rend away its only hope; <sup>130</sup>  
Then, Pity could have scarcely found on  
earth

An object worthier of regard than he,  
In the transition of that bitter hour !

Lost was she, lost; nor could the Sufferer  
say

That in the act of preference he had been  
Unjustly dealt with; but the Maid was  
gone !

Had vanished from his prospects and de-  
sires;

Not by translation to the heavenly choir  
Who have put off their mortal spoils — ah  
no ! <sup>139</sup>

She lives another’s wishes to complete, —  
‘ Joy be their lot, and happiness,’ he cried,  
‘ His lot and hers, as misery must be mine ! ’

Such was that strong concussion; but the  
Man,

Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some  
huge oak

By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed

The stedfast quiet natural to a mind  
Of composition gentle and sedate,  
And, in its movements, circumspect and  
slow.

To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,  
O’er which enchained by science he had  
loved <sup>150</sup>

To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,  
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for  
truth

With keener appetite (if that might be)  
And closer industry. Of what ensued  
Within the heart no outward sign appeared  
Till a betraying sickness was seen  
To tinge his cheek; and through his frame  
it crept

With slow mutation unconcealable;  
Such universal change as autumn makes  
In the fair body of a leafy grove, <sup>160</sup>  
Discoloured, then divested.

”T is affirmed  
By poets skilled in nature’s secret ways  
That Love will not submit to be con-  
trolled

By mastery: — and the good Man lacked  
not friends

Who strove to instil this truth into his  
mind,

A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.

‘ Go to the hills,’ said one, ‘ remit a while

‘ This baneful diligence: — at early morn

‘ Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and  
woods;

‘ And, leaving it to others to foretell, <sup>170</sup>

‘ By calculations sage, the ebb and flow

‘ Of tides, and when the moon will be  
eclipsed,

‘ Do you, for your own benefit, construct

‘ A calendar of flowers, plucked as they  
blossom

‘ Where health abides, and cheerfulness,  
and peace.’

The attempt was made; — ’t is needless to  
report

How hopelessly; but innocence is strong,  
And an entire simplicity of mind,

A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven;

That opens, for such sufferers, relief <sup>180</sup>

Within the soul, fountains of grace divine;  
And doth commend their weakness and  
disease

To Nature’s care, assisted in her office  
By all the elements that round her wait

To generate, to preserve, and to restore;  
And by her beautiful array of forms

Shedding sweet influence from above; or  
 pure  
 Delight exhaling from the ground they  
 tread."

"Impute it not to impatience, if," ex-  
 claimed 187  
 The Wanderer, "I infer that he was healed  
 By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err: the powers, that had  
 been lost  
 By slow degrees, were gradually regained;  
 The fluttering nerves composed; the beat-  
 ing heart  
 In rest established; and the jarriug  
 thoughts  
 To harmony restored. — But yon dark  
 mould  
 Will cover him, in the fulness of his  
 strength,  
 Hastily smitten by a fever's force;  
 Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused  
 Time to look back with tenderness on her  
 Whom he had loved in passion; and to  
 send 201  
 Some farewell words — with one, but one,  
 request;  
 That, from his dying hand, she would ac-  
 cept  
 Of his possessions that which most he  
 prized;  
 A book, upon whose leaves some chosen  
 plants,  
 By his own hand disposed with nicest care,  
 In undecaying beauty were preserved;  
 Mute register, to him, of time and place,  
 And various fluctuations in the breast;  
 To her, a monument of faithful love 210  
 Conquered, and in tranquillity retained !

Close to his destined habitation, lies  
 One who achieved a humbler victory,  
 Though marvellous in its kind. A place  
 there is  
 High in these mountains, that allured a  
 band  
 Of keen adventurers to unite their pains  
 In search of precious ore: they tried, were  
 foiled —  
 And all desisted, all, save him alone.  
 He, taking counsel of his own clear  
 thoughts, 219  
 And trusting only to his own weak hands,  
 Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,

Unseconded, uncountenanced ; then, as  
 time  
 Passed on, while still his lonely efforts  
 found

No recompense, derided; and at length,  
 By many pitied, as insane of mind;  
 By others dreaded as the luckless thrall  
 Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope  
 By various mockery of sight and sound;  
 Hope after hope, encouraged and destroyed.  
 — But when the lord of seasons had ma-  
 tured 220

The fruits of earth through space of twice  
 ten years,

The mountain's entrails offered to his view  
 And trembling grasp the long-deferred  
 reward.

Not with more transport did Columbus  
 greet  
 A world, his rich discovery ! But our  
 Swain,

A very hero till his point was gained,  
 Proved all unable to support the weight  
 Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he  
 looked

With an unsettled liberty of thought,  
 Wishes and endless schemes; by daylight  
 walked 240

Giddy and restless; ever and anon  
 Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate cups;  
 And truly might be said to die of joy !  
 He vanished; but conspicuous to this day  
 The path remains that linked his cottage-  
 door

To the mine's mouth; a long and slanting  
 track,

Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,  
 Worn by his daily visits to and from  
 The darksome centre of a constant hope.  
 This vestige, neither force of beating rain,  
 Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw 251  
 Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;  
 And it is named, in memory of the event,  
 The PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom  
 Man has his strength," exclaimed the  
 Wanderer, "oh !

Do thou direct it ! To the virtuous grant  
 The penetrative eye which can perceive  
 In this blind world the guiding vein of  
 hope;

That, like this Labourer, such may dig their  
 way

' Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified ; ' 260  
 Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve !"

"That prayer were not superfluous,"  
said the Priest,  
"Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,  
That Westminster, for Britain's glory,  
holds

Within the bosom of her awful pile,  
Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,  
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due  
to all,

Wherever laid, who living fell below  
Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of  
*pain*

If to the opposite extreme they sank. <sup>270</sup>  
How would you pity her who yonder rests;  
Him, farther off; the pair, who here are  
laid;

But, above all, that mixture of earth's  
mould

Whom sight of this green hillock to my  
mind

Recalls!

*He* lived not till his locks were nipped  
By seasonable frost of age; nor died  
Before his temples, prematurely forced  
To mix the manly brown with silver grey,  
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect  
Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath  
usurped <sup>280</sup>  
The natural crown that sage Experience  
wears.

Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,  
And prompt to exhibit all that he possessed  
Or could perform; a zealous actor, hired  
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn  
Into the lists of giddy enterprise —

Such was he; yet, as if within his frame  
Two several souls alternately had lodged,  
Two sets of manners could the Youth put  
on; <sup>280</sup>

And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird  
That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,  
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth  
and still

As the mute swan that floats adown the  
stream,

Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,  
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,  
That flutters on the bough, lighter than he;  
And not a flower, that droops in the green  
shade,

More winningly reserved! If ye enquire  
How such consummate elegance was bred  
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice;  
'T was Nature's will; who sometimes un-  
dertakes, <sup>301</sup>

For the reproof of human vanity,  
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.  
Hence, for this Favourite — lavishly en-  
dowed

With personal gifts, and bright instinctive  
wit,

While both, embellishing each other, stood  
Yet farther recommended by the charm  
Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,  
And skill in letters — every fancy shaped  
Fair expectations; nor, when to the world's  
Capacious field forth went the Adventurer,  
there <sup>311</sup>

Were he and his attainments overlooked,  
Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,  
Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,  
Like blighted buds; or clouds that mim-  
icked land

Before the sailor's eye; or diamond drops  
That sparkling decked the morning grass;  
or aught

That *was* attractive, and hath ceased to be!

Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the  
rites

Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,  
Who, by humiliation undeterred, <sup>321</sup>  
Sought for his weariness a place of rest  
Within his Father's gates. — Whence came  
he? — clothed

In tattered garb, from hovels where abides  
Necessity, the stationary host  
Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns  
Where no one dwells but the wide-staring  
owl

And the owl's prey; from these bare haunts,  
to which

He had descended from the proud saloon,  
He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,  
The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived <sup>331</sup>  
In strength, in power refitted, he renewed  
His suit to Fortune; and she smiled again  
Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,  
Thrice sank as willingly. For he — whose  
nerves

Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his  
voice

Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,  
By the nice finger of fair ladies touched  
In glittering halls — was able to derive  
No less enjoyment from an abject choice.  
Who happier for the moment — who more  
blithe <sup>341</sup>

Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary  
holds

His talents lending to exalt the freaks  
Of merrymaking beggars, — nor provoked  
To laughter multiplied in louder peals  
By his malicious wit; then, all enchained  
With mute astonishment, themselves to see  
In their own arts outdone, their fame  
eclipsed,

As by the very presence of the Fiend  
Who dictates and inspires illusive feats, 350  
For knavish purposes! The city, too,  
(With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers  
Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect  
As there to linger, there to eat his bread,  
Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment;  
Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,  
Listen who would, be wrought upon who  
might,

Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.  
— Such the too frequent tenor of his boast  
In ears that relished the report; — but all  
Was from his Parents happily concealed; 361  
Who saw enough for blame and pitying  
love.

They also were permitted to receive  
His last repentant breath; and closed his  
eyes,

No more to open on that irksome world  
Where he had long existed in the state  
Of a young fowl beneath one mother  
hatched,

Though from another sprung, different in  
kind:

Where he had lived, and could not cease to  
live,

Distracted in propensity; content 370  
With neither element of good or ill;  
And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;  
Of contradictions infinite the slave,  
Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him  
One with himself, and one with them that  
sleep."

"Tis strange," observed the Solitary,  
"strange

It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,  
That in a land where charity provides  
For all that can no longer feed themselves,  
A man like this should choose to bring his  
shame 380

To the parental door; and with his sighs  
Infect the air which he had freely breathed  
In happy infancy. He could not pine,  
Through lack of converse; no — he must  
have found

Abundant exercise for thought and speech,

In his dividual being, self-reviewed,  
Self-catechised, self-punished. — Some  
there are

Who, drawing near their final home, and  
much

And daily longing that the same were  
reached,

Would rather shun than seek the fellowship  
Of kindred mould. — Such haply here are  
laid? " 391

"Yes," said the Priest, "the Genius of  
our hills —

Who seems, by these stupendous barriers  
cast

Round his domain, desirous not alone  
To keep his own, but also to exclude  
All other progeny — doth sometimes lure,  
Even by his studied depth of privacy,  
The unhappy alien hoping to obtain  
Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,  
In place from outward molestation free, 400  
Helps to internal ease. Of many such  
Could I discourse; but as their stay was  
brief,

So their departure only left behind  
Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace  
Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair  
Who, from the pressure of their several  
fates,

Meeting as strangers, in a petty town  
Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach  
Of this far-winding vale, remained as friends  
True to their choice; and gave their bones  
in trust 410

To this loved cemetery, here to lodge  
With unescutcheoned privacy interred  
Far from the family vault. — A Chieftain  
one

By right of birth; within whose spotless  
breast

The fire of ancient Caledonia burned:  
He, with the foremost whose impatience  
hailed

The Stuart, landing to resume, by force  
Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,  
Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their  
head,

With his brave sword endeavoured to pre-  
vent 420

Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped  
From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores  
He fled; and when the lenient hand of time  
Those troubles had appeased, he sought  
and gained,

For his obscured condition, an obscure  
Retreat, within this nook of English ground.

The other, born in Britain's southern  
tract,  
Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed  
His gentler sentiments of love and hate,  
There, where *they* placed them who in con-  
science prized 430

The new succession, as a line of kings  
Whose oath had virtue to protect the land  
Against the dire assaults of papacy  
And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark  
On the distempered flood of public life,  
And cause for most rare triumph will be  
thine

If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,  
The stream, that bears thee forward, prove  
not, soon

Or late, a perilous master. He — who oft,  
Beneath the battlements and stately trees  
That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,  
Had moralised on this, and other truths 442  
Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied —  
Was forced to vent his wisdom with a  
sigh

Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitter-  
ness,

When he had crushed a plentiful estate  
By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat  
In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the at-  
tempt:

And while the uproar of that desperate strife  
Continued yet to vibrate on his ear, 450  
The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed  
name,

(For the mere sound and echo of his own  
Haunted him with sensations of disgust  
That he was glad to lose) slunk from the  
world

To the deep shade of those untravellerd  
Wilds;

In which the Scottish Laird had long pos-  
sessed

An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they  
met,

Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite  
And sullen Hanoverian! You might think  
That losses and vexations, less severe 460  
Than those which they had severally sus-  
tained,

Would have inclined each to abate his zeal  
For his ungrateful cause; no, — I have  
heard

My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the calm

Of that small town encountering thus, they  
filled,

Daily, its bowling-green with harmless  
strife;

Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the  
church;

And vexed the market-place. But in the  
breasts

Of these opponents gradually was wrought,  
With little change of general sentiment,  
Such leaning towards each other, that their  
days 471

By choice were spent in constant fellowship;  
And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,  
Those very bickerings made them love it  
more.

A favourite boundary to their lengthened  
walks

This Churchyard was. And, whether they  
had come

Treading their path in sympathy and linked  
In social converse, or by some short space

Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,  
One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway

Over both minds, when they awhile had  
marked 481

The visible quiet of this holy ground,  
And breathed its soothing air: — the spirit  
of hope

And saintly magnanimity; that — spurning  
The field of selfish difference and dispute,

And every care which transitory things,  
Earth and the kingdoms of the earth,  
create —

Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,  
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise de-  
barred,

Which else the Christian virtue might have  
claimed. 490

There live who yet remember here to  
have seen

Their courtly figures, seated on the stump  
Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.

But as the remnant of the long-lived tree  
Was disappearing by a swift decay,

They, with joint care, determined to erect,  
Upon its site, a dial, that might stand

For public use preserved, and thus survive  
As their own private monument: for this

Was the particular spot, in which they  
wished 500

(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish  
the desire)



That, undivided, their remains should lie.  
So, where the mouldered tree had stood,  
was raised

Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of  
steps

That to the decorated pillar lead,  
A work of art more sumptuous than might  
seem

To suit this place; yet built in no proud  
scorn

Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed  
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.  
Around the margin of the plate, whereon  
The shadow falls to note the stealthy  
hours,

Winds an inscriptive legend." — At these  
words

Thither we turned; and gathered, as we  
read,

The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers  
couched:

*"Time flies; it is his melancholy task,  
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,  
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.  
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,  
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will  
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace, 511  
Which the world wants, shall be for thee con-  
firmed!"*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unlettered  
Muse,"

Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain of  
thought

Accords with nature's language; — the soft  
voice

Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks  
Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.  
If, then, their blended influence be not lost  
Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,  
Even upon mine, the more are we required  
To feel for those among our fellow-men, 530  
Who, offering no obeisance to the world,  
Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a  
sense

Of constant infelicity,' cut off  
From peace like exiles on some barren rock,  
Their life's appointed prison; not more free  
Than sentinels, between two armies, set,  
With nothing better, in the chill night air,  
Than their own thoughts to comfort them.

Say why

That ancient story of Prometheus chained  
To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus; 540  
The vulture, the inexhaustible repast

Drawn from his vitals? Say what meant  
the woes

By Tantalus entailed upon his race,  
And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes?  
Fictions in form, but in their substance  
truths,

Tremendous truths! familiar to the men  
Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.  
Exchange the shepherd's frock of native  
grey

For robes with regal purple tinged; convert  
The crook into a sceptre; give the pomp 550  
Of circumstance; and here the tragic  
Muse

Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.  
Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills,  
The generations are prepared; the pangs,  
The internal pangs, are ready; the dread  
strife

Of poor humanity's afflicted will  
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer,  
"these be terms

Which a divine philosophy rejects,  
We, whose established and unfailing trust  
Is in controlling Providence, admit 561  
That, through all stations, human life  
abounds

With mysteries; — for, if Faith were left  
untried,

How could the might, that lurks within her,  
then

Be shown? her glorious excellence — that  
ranks

Among the first of Powers and Virtues —  
proved?

Our system is not fashioned to preclude  
That sympathy which you for others ask;  
And I could tell, not travelling for my  
theme

Beyond these humble graves, of grievous  
crimes 570

And strange disasters; but I pass them  
by,

Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed  
in peace.

— Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat  
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight  
By the deformities of brutish vice:

For, in such portraits, though a vulgar face  
And a coarse outside of repulsive life  
And unaffecting manners might at once  
Be recognised by all" — "Ah! do not  
think,"

The Wanderer somewhat eagerly ex-  
claimed, 580

"Wish could be ours that you, for such  
poor gain,

(Gain shall I call it? — gain of what? —  
for whom?)

Should breathe a word tending to violate  
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look  
for

In slight of that forbearance and reserve  
Which common human-heartedness inspires,  
And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,  
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far  
From us to infringe the laws of charity. 590  
Let judgment here in mercy be pro-  
nounced;

This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and  
this

Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek  
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind  
How, from his lofty throne, the sun can  
fling

Colours as bright on exhalations bred  
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,  
As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,  
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,  
"Of such illusion do we here incur; 600  
Temptation here is none to exceed the  
truth;

No evidence appears that they who rest  
Within this ground, were covetous of praise,  
Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.  
Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and  
green,

Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,  
A heaving surface, almost wholly free  
From interruption of sepulchral stones,  
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf  
And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen  
trust 610

The lingering gleam of their departed  
lives

To oral record, and the silent heart;  
Depositories faithful and more kind  
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,  
What boots the sculptured tomb? And  
who can blame,

Who rather would not envy, men that feel  
This mutual confidence; if, from such  
source,

The practice flow, — if thence, or from a  
deep

And general humility in death?  
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring  
From disregard of time's destructive  
power, 621

As only capable to prey on things  
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

Yet — in less simple districts, where we  
see

Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone  
In courting notice; and the ground all  
paved

With commendations of departed worth;  
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent  
lives,

Of each domestic charity fulfilled,  
And sufferings meekly borne — I, for my  
part, 630

Though with the silence pleased that here  
prevails,

Among those fair recitals also range,  
Soothed by the natural spirit which they  
breathe.

And, in the centre of a world whose soil  
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed  
round

With such memorials, I have sometimes  
felt,

It was no momentary happiness  
To have *one* Enclosure where the voice that  
speaks

In envy or detraction is not heard;  
Which malice may not enter; where the  
traces 640

Of evil inclinations are unknown;  
Where love and pity tenderly unite  
With resignation; and no jarring tone  
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb  
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned,"  
The Pastor said, "I willingly confine  
My narratives to subjects that excite  
Feelings with these accordant; love, es-  
teem,

And admiration; lifting up a veil,  
A sunbeam introducing among hearts 650  
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have  
Clear images before your gladdened eyes  
Of nature's unambitious underwood,  
And flowers that prosper in the shade.  
And when

I speak of such among my flock as swerved  
Or fell, those only shall be singled out  
Upon whose lapse, or error, something  
more

Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;  
To such will we restrict our notice, else  
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,  
I feel, good reasons why we should not  
leave 661

Wholly untraced a more forbidding way,  
For, strength to persevere and to support,  
And energy to conquer and repel —  
These elements of virtue, that declare  
The native grandeur of the human soul —  
Are oft-times not unprofitably shown  
In the perverseness of a selfish course:  
Truth every day exemplified, no less  
In the grey cottage by the murmuring  
stream 670

Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,  
Or 'mid the factious senate, unappalled  
Whoe'er may sink, or rise — to sink again,  
As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

There," said the Vicar, pointing as he  
spake,

"A woman rests in peace; surpassed by few  
In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.  
Tall was her stature; her complexion dark  
And saturnine; her head not raised to hold  
Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest to-  
wards earth, 680

But in projection carried, as she walked  
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes;  
Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual  
thought

Was her broad forehead; like the brow of  
one

Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful  
glare

Of overpowering light. — While yet a child,  
She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,  
Towered like the imperial thistle, not un-  
furnished

With its appropriate grace, yet rather  
seeking

To be admired, than coveted and loved. 690  
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign  
queen,

Over her comrades; else their simple sports,  
Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,  
Had crossed her only to be shunned with  
scorn.

— Oh! pang of sorrowful regret for those  
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has  
enthralled,

That they have lived for harsher servitude,  
Whether in soul, in body, or estate!

Such doom was hers; yet nothing could  
subdue

Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface  
Those brighter images by books imprest 701  
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars  
That occupy their places, and, though oft  
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by  
haze,

Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

Two passions, both degenerate, for they  
both

Began in honour, gradually obtained  
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life;  
An unremitting, avaricious thrift;  
And a strange thralldom of maternal love,  
That held her spirit, in its own despite, 711  
Bound — by vexation, and regret, and scorn,  
Constrained forgiveness, and relenting vows,  
And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame  
concealed —

To a poor dissolute Son, her only child.

— Her wedded days had opened with mis-  
hap,

Whence dire dependence. What could she  
perform

To shake the burthen off? Ah! there was  
felt,

Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.

She mused, resolved, adhered to her re-  
solve; 720

The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the  
heart

Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's  
blessing

Not seeking from that source, she placed  
her trust

In ceaseless pains — and strictest parsimony  
Which sternly hoarded all that could be  
spared,

From each day's need, out of each day's  
least gain.

Thus all was re-established, and a pile  
Constructed, that sufficed for every end,  
Save the contentment of the builder's mind;  
A mind by nature indisposed to aught 730  
So placid, so inactive, as content;  
A mind intolerant of lasting peace,  
And cherishing the pang her heart deplored.  
Dread life of conflict! which I oft compared  
To the agitation of a brook that runs  
Down a rocky mountain, buried now and lost  
In silent pools, now in strong eddies  
chained; -

But never to be charmed to gentleness:  
Its best attainment fits of such repose  
As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming.

A sudden illness seized her in the  
strength 711  
Of life's autumnal season. — Shall I tell  
How on her bed of death the Matron lay,  
To Providence submissive, so she thought;  
But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon,  
almost

To anger, by the malady that griped  
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,  
As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?  
She prayed, she moaned; — her husband's  
sister watched

Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs; 750  
And yet the very sound of that kind foot  
Was anguish to her ears! 'And must she  
rule,'

This was the death-doomed Woman heard  
to say

In bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign.  
Sole Mistress of this house, when I am gone?  
Tend what I tended, calling it her own!  
Enough; — I fear too much. — One vernal  
evening,

While she was yet in prime of health and  
strength,

I well remember, while I passed her door  
Alone, with loitering step, and upward eye  
Turned towards the planet Jupiter that  
hung 761

Above the centre of the Vale, a voice  
Roused me, her voice; it said, 'That glori-  
ous star

In its untroubled element will shine  
As now it shines, when we are laid in  
earth

And safe from all our sorrows.' With a  
sigh

She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained  
By faith in glory that shall far transcend  
Aught by these perishable heavens disclosed  
To sight or mind. Nor less than care  
divine 770

Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,  
Was into meekness softened and subdued;  
Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,  
With resignation sink into the grave;  
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,  
And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,  
Tho', in this Vale, remembered with deep  
awe."

THE Vicar paused; and toward a seat ad-  
vanced,  
A long stone-seat, fixed in the Churchyard  
wall;

Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part 780  
Offering a sunny resting-place to them  
Who seek the House of worship, while the  
bells

Yet ring with all their voices, or before  
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.  
Beneath the shade we all sate down; and  
there,

His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of  
March,

Screened by its parent, so that little mound  
Lies guarded by its neighbour: the small  
heap 790

Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth  
rest;

The sheltering hillock is the Mother's  
grave.

If mild discourse, and manners that con-  
ferred

A natural dignity on humblest rank;  
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,  
That for a face not beautiful did more  
Than beauty for the fairest face can do;  
And if religious tenderness of heart,  
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears  
Shed when the clouds had gathered and  
distinguished 800

The spotless ether of a maiden life;  
If these may make a hallowed spot of  
earth

More holy in the sight of God or Man;  
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall  
brood

Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless  
man,

Could field or grove, could any spot of  
earth,

Show to his eye an image of the pangs  
Which it hath witnessed; render back an  
echo

Of the sad steps by which it hath been  
trod! 810

There, by her innocent Baby's precious  
grave,

And on the very turf that roofs her own,  
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel

In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.  
Now she is not; the swelling turf reports  
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's  
tears

Is silent; nor is any vestige left  
Of the path worn by mournful tread of  
her

Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had  
moved

In virgin fearlessness, with step that  
seemed 820

Caught from the pressure of elastic turf  
Upon the mountains gemmed with morning  
dew,

In the prime hour of sweetest scents and  
airs.

— Serious and thoughtful was her mind;  
and yet,

By reconciliation exquisite and rare,  
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-  
girl

Were such as might have quickened and  
inspired

A Titian's hand, addrest to picture forth  
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade  
What time the hunter's earliest horn is  
heard 830

Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm  
Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL  
TREE;

From dateless usage which our peasants  
hold

Of giving welcome to the first of May  
By dances round its trunk. — And if the  
sky

Permit, like honours, dance and song, are  
paid

To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty  
stars

Or the clear moon. The queen of these  
gay sports,

If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,  
Was hapless Ellen. — No one touched the  
ground 840

So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks  
Less gracefully were braided; — but this  
praise,

Methinks, would better suit another place.

She loved, and fondly deemed herself  
beloved.

— The road is dim, the current unper-  
ceived,

The weakness painful and most pitiful,

By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,  
May be delivered to distress and shame.

Such fate was hers. — The last time Ellen  
danced,

Among her equals, round THE JOYFUL  
TREE, 850

She bore a secret burthen; and full soon

Was left to tremble for a breaking vow, —

Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,

Alone, within her widowed Mother's house.

It was the season of unfolding leaves,

Of days advancing toward their utmost  
length,

And small birds singing happily to mates

Happy as they. With spirit-saddening  
power

Winds pipe through fading woods; but  
those blithe notes 859

Strike the deserted to the heart; I speak

Of what I know, and what we feel within.

— Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt

Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost  
twig

A thrush resorts, and annually chants,

At morn and evening from that naked  
perch,

While all the undergrove is thick with  
leaves,

A time-beguiling ditty, for delight

Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.

— 'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,

'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn  
pledge; 870

And nature that is kind in woman's  
breast,

And reason that in man is wise and good,

And fear of him who is a righteous judge;

Why do not these prevail for human life,

To keep two hearts together, that began

Their spring-time with one love, and that  
have need

Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet

To grant, or be received; while that poor  
bird —

O come and hear him! Thou who hast to  
me

Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly  
creature, 880

One of God's simple children that yet know  
not

The universal Parent, how he sings

As if he wished the firmament of heaven

Should listen, and give back to him the  
voice

Of his triumphant constancy and love;

The proclamation that he makes, how far  
His darkness doth transcend our fickle  
light !

Such was the tender passage, not by me  
Repeated without loss of simple phrase,  
Which I perused, even as the words had  
been

890

Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand  
To the blank margin of a Valentine,  
Bedropped with tears. 'T will please you  
to be told

That, studiously withdrawing from the eye  
Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet  
In lonely reading found a meek resource:  
How thankful for the warmth of summer  
days,

When she could slip into the cottage-barn,  
And find a secret oratory there;  
Or, in the garden, under friendly veil  
Of their long twilight, pore upon her book  
By the last lingering help of the open sky  
Until dark night dismissed her to her bed !  
Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose  
The unconquerable pang of despised love.

A kindlier passion opened on her soul  
When that poor Child was born. Upon its  
face

She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift  
Of unexpected promise, where a grief  
Or dread was all that had been thought of,  
— joy

910

Far livelier than bewildered traveller feels,  
Amid a perilous waste that all night long  
Hath harassed him toiling through fearful  
storm,

When he beholds the first pale speck se-  
rene

Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, revealed,  
And greets it with thanksgiving. 'Till  
this hour,

Thus, in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,  
'There was a stony region in my heart;  
But He, at whose command the parched  
rock

Was smitten, and poured forth a quenching  
stream,

920

Hath softened that obduracy, and made  
Unlooked-for gladness in the desert place,  
To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I  
breathe

The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake  
My infant ! and for that good Mother  
dear,

Who bore me; and hath prayed for me in  
vain;—

Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.'

She spake, nor was the assurance unful-  
filled;

And if heart-rending thoughts would oft  
return,

They stayed not long.— The blameless  
Infant grew;

930

The Child whom Ellen and her Mother  
loved

They soon were proud of; tended it and  
nursed;

A soothing comforter, although forlorn;

Like a poor singing-bird from distant  
lands;

Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by  
With vacant mind, not seldom may ob-  
serve

Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,  
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

Through four months' space the Infant  
drew its food

From the maternal breast; then scruples  
rose;

910

Thoughts, which the rich are free from,  
came and crossed

The fond affection. She no more could  
bear

By her offence to lay a twofold weight

On a kind parent willing to forget

Their slender means: so, to that parent's  
care

Trusting her child, she left their common  
home,

And undertook with dutiful content

A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,

Unknown to you that in these simple vales

The natural feeling of equality

950

Is by domestic service unimpaired;

Yet, though such service be, with us, re-  
moved

From sense of degradation, not the less

The ungente mind can easily find means

To impose severe restraints and laws un-  
just,

Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to  
feel:

For (blinded by an over-anxious dread

Of such excitement and divided thought

As with her office would but ill accord)

The pair, whose infant she was bound to  
nurse,

960

Forbade her all communion with her own.  
Week after week, the mandate they enforced.

— So near ! yet not allowed, upon that sight

To fix her eyes — alas ! 't was hard to bear !  
But worse affliction must be borne — far worse ;

For 't is Heaven's will — that, after a disease

Begun and ended within three days' space,  
Her child should die ; as Ellen now exclaimed,

Her own — deserted child ! — Once, only once,

She saw it in that mortal malady ; <sup>970</sup>  
And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain

Permission to attend its obsequies.  
She reached the house, last of the funeral train ;

And some one, as she entered, having chanced

To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,

'Nay,' said she, with commanding look,  
a spirit

Of anger never seen in her before,  
'Nay, ye must wait my time !' and down she sate,

And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat  
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping, <sup>980</sup>

Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,  
Until at length her soul was satisfied.

You see the Infant's Grave ; and to this spot,

The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,  
On whatsoever errand, urged her steps :  
Hither she came ; here stood, and sometimes knelt

In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene !  
So call her ; for not only she bewailed

A mother's loss, but mourned in bitterness  
Her own transgression ; penitent sincere <sup>990</sup>  
As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye.

— At length the parents of the foster-child,  
Noting that in despite of their commands  
She still renewed and could not but renew  
Those visitations, ceased to send her forth ;  
Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, confined.

I failed not to remind them that they erred ;  
For holy Nature might not thus be crossed,

Thus wronged in woman's breast : in vain  
I pleaded —

But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapped, <sup>1000</sup>

And the flower drooped ; as every eye could see,

It hung its head in mortal languishment.

— Aided by this appearance, I at length  
Prevailed ; and, from those bonds released,  
she went

Home to her mother's house.

The Youth was fled ;  
The rash betrayer could not face the shame  
Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused ;

And little would his presence, or proof given

(Of a relenting soul, have now availed ;

For, like a shadow, he was passed away

From Ellen's thoughts ; had perished to her mind <sup>1011</sup>

For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,  
Save only those which to their common shame,

And to his moral being appertained :

Hope from that quarter would, I know,  
have brought

A heavenly comfort ; there she recognised

An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need ;

There, and, as seemed, there only.

She had built,  
Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest

In blindness all too near the river's edge ;

That work a summer flood with hasty swell <sup>1021</sup>

Had swept away ; and now her Spirit longed

For its last flight to heaven's security.

— The bodily frame wasted from day to day ;

Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,

Her mind she strictly tutored to find peace

And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought,

And much she read ; and brooded feelingly  
Upon her own unworthiness. To me,

As to a spiritual comforter and friend, <sup>1030</sup>

Her heart she opened ; and no pains were spared

To mitigate, as gently as I could,

The sting of self-reproach, with healing words.

Meek Saint ! through patience glorified on earth !

In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,

The ghastly face of cold decay put on  
A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine !  
May I not mention — that, within those  
walls,

In due observance of her pious wish,  
The congregation joined with me in prayer  
For her soul's good ? Nor was that office  
vain.

— Much did she suffer: but, if any friend,  
Beholding her condition, at the sight  
Gave way to words of pity or complaint,  
She stilled them with a prompt reproof,  
and said,

'He who afflicts me knows what I can  
bear;

And, when I fail, and can endure no more,  
Will mercifully take me to himself.'  
So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit  
passed

Into that pure and unknown world of love  
Where injury cannot come: — and here is  
laid

The mortal Body by her Infant's side."

The Vicar ceased; and downcast looks  
made known  
That each had listened with his inmost  
heart.

For me, the emotion scarcely was less  
strong

Or less benign than that which I had felt  
When seated near my venerable Friend,  
Under those shady elms, from him I heard  
The story that retraced the slow decline  
Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath  
With the neglected house to which she  
clung.

— I noted that the Solitary's cheek  
Confessed the power of nature. — Pleased  
though sad,

More pleased than sad, the grey-haired  
Wanderer sate;

Thanks to his pure imaginative soul  
Capacious and serene; his blameless life,  
His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and  
love

Of human kind ! He was it who first broke  
The pensive silence, saying: —

"Blest are they  
Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong  
Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have  
erred.

This tale gives proof that Heaven most  
gently deals

With such, in their affliction. — Ellen's fate,

Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,  
Call to my mind dark hints which I have  
heard

Of one who died within this vale, by doom  
Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.

Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the  
bones

Of Wilfrid Armathwaite ?"

The Vicar answered,  
"In that green nook, close by the Church-  
yard wall,

Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself  
In memory and for warning, and in sign  
Of sweetness where dire anguish had been  
known,

Of reconciliation after deep offence —  
There doth he rest. No theme his fate  
supplies

For the smooth glossings of the indulgent  
world;

Nor need the windings of his devious course  
Be here retraced; — enough that, by mishap  
And venial error, robbed of competence,

And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,  
He craved a substitute in troubled joy; <sup>1091</sup>  
Against his conscience rose in arms, and,

braving  
Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-  
vow.

That which he had been weak enough to do  
Was misery in remembrance; he was stung,  
Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the  
smiles

Of wife and children stung to agony.  
Wretched at home, he gained no peace  
abroad;

Ranged through the mountains, slept upon  
the earth,

Asked comfort of the open air, and found  
No quiet in the darkness of the night, <sup>1101</sup>  
No pleasure in the beauty of the day.

His flock he slighted: his paternal fields  
Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished  
To fly — but whither ! And this gracious  
Church,

That wears a look so full of peace and hope  
And love, benignant mother of the vale,  
How fair amid her brood of cottages !  
She was to him a sickness and reproach.

Much to the last remained unknown: but  
this <sup>1110</sup>

Is sure, that through remorse and grief he  
died;

Though pitied among men, absolved by  
God,



He could not find forgiveness in himself;  
Nor could endure the weight of his own  
shame.

Here rests a Mother. But from her I turn  
And from her grave. — Behold — upon that  
ridge,

That, stretching boldly from the mountain  
side,

Carries into the centre of the vale  
Its rocks and woods — the Cottage where  
she dwelt

And where yet dwells her faithful Partner,  
left 1120

(Full eight years past) the solitary prop  
Of many helpless Children. I begin  
With words that might be prelude to a tale  
Of sorrow and dejection; but I feel

No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes  
See daily in that happy family.

— Bright garland form they for the pensive  
brow

Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,  
Those six fair Daughters, budding yet —  
not one,

Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower.  
Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once 1131

That Father was, and filled with anxious  
fear,

Now, by experience taught, he stands as-  
sured,

That God, who takes away, yet takes not  
half

Of what he seems to take; or gives it back,  
Not to our prayer, but far beyond our  
prayer;

He gives it — the boon produce of a soil  
Which our endeavours have refused to till,  
And hope hath never watered. The Abode,  
Whose grateful owner can attest these  
truths, 1140

Even were the object nearer to our sight,  
Would seem in no distinction to surpass  
The rudest habitations. Ye might think  
That it had sprung self-raised from earth,  
or grown

Out of the living rock, to be adorned  
By nature only; but, if thither led,  
Ye would discover, then, a studious work  
Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

Brought from the woods the honeysuckle  
twines

Around the porch, and seems, in that trim  
place, 1150

A plant no longer wild; the cultured rose  
There blossoms, strong in health, and will  
be soon

Roof-high; the wild pink crowns the gar-  
den-wall,

And with the flowers are intermingled  
stones

Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of  
the hills.

These ornaments, that fade not with the  
year,

A hardy Girl continues to provide;  
Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights,  
Her Father's prompt attendant, does for  
him

All that a boy could do, but with delight  
More keen and prouder daring; yet hath  
she, 1161

Within the garden, like the rest, a bed  
For her own flowers and favourite herbs,  
a space,

By sacred charter, holden for her use.

— These, and whatever else the garden  
bears

Of fruit or flower, permission asked or not,  
I freely gather; and my leisure draws

A not unfrequent pastime from the hum  
Of bees around their range of sheltered  
hives

Busy in that enclosure; while the rill, 1170  
That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes

his voice  
To the pure course of human life which

there  
Flows on in solitude. But, when the gloom  
Of night is falling round my steps, then  
most

This Dwelling charms me; often I stop  
short,

(Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth  
my sight

With prospect of the company within,  
Laid open through the blazing window: —  
there

I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel  
Spinning amain, as if to overtake 1180

The never-halting time; or, in her turn,  
Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood  
That skill in this or other household work,  
Which, from her Father's honoured hand,  
herself,

While she was yet a little-one, had learned.  
Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are gay;  
And the whole house seems filled with  
gaiety.

— Thrice happy, then, the Mother may be deemed,  
 The Wife, from whose consolatory grave  
 I turned, that ye in mind might witness  
 where,  
 And how, her Spirit yet survives on earth !”<sup>1190</sup>

## BOOK SEVENTH

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS — (*continued*)

## ARGUMENT

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's mind — Pastor invited to give account of certain Graves that lie apart — Clergyman and his Family — Fortunate influence of change of situation — Activity in extreme old age — Another Clergyman, a character of resolute Virtue — Lamentations over misdirected applause — Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man — Elevated character of a blind man — Reflection upon Blindness — Interrupted by a Peasant who passes — His animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity — He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting Trees — A female Infant's Grave — Joy at her Birth — Sorrow at her Departure — A youthful Peasant — His patriotic enthusiasm and distinguished qualities — His untimely death — Exultation of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this Picture — Solitary how affected — Monument of a Knight — Traditions concerning him — Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the revolutions of society — Hints at his own past Calling — Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the  
 Historian passed,  
 The words he uttered, and the scene that lay  
 Before our eyes, awakened in my mind  
 Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours,  
 When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale,  
 (What time the splendour of the setting sun  
 Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign brow,  
 On Cader Idris, or huge Penmaenmaur)  
 A wandering Youth, I listened with delight  
 To pastoral melody or warlike air,<sup>10</sup>  
 Drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp  
 By some accomplished Master, while he sate  
 Amid the quiet of the green recess,  
 And there did inexhaustibly dispense  
 An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,

Tender or blithe ; now, as the varying mood  
 Of his own spirit urged, — now, as a voice  
 From youth or maiden, or some honoured chief  
 Of his compatriot villagers (that hung  
 Around him, drinking in the impassioned notes  
 Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required<sup>20</sup>  
 For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains  
 of power  
 Were they, to seize and occupy the sense ;  
 But to a higher mark than song can reach  
 Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream  
 Which overflowed the soul was passed away,  
 A consciousness remained that it had left,  
 Deposited upon the silent shore  
 Of memory, images and precious thoughts,  
 That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.<sup>30</sup>

“ These grassy heaps lie amicably close,”  
 Said I, “ like surges heaving in the wind  
 Along the surface of a mountain pool :  
 Whence comes it, then, that yonder we behold  
 Five graves, and only five, that rise together  
 Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching  
 On the smooth playground of the village-school ? ”

The Vicar answered, — “ No disdainful pride  
 In them who rest beneath, nor any course  
 Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped  
 To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.  
 — Once more look forth, and follow with your sight<sup>42</sup>  
 The length of road that from yon mountain's base  
 Through bare enclosures stretches, 'till its line  
 Is lost within a little tuft of trees ;  
 Then, reappearing in a moment, quits  
 The cultured fields ; and up the heathy waste,  
 Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,  
 Led towards an easy outlet of the vale,  
 That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,<sup>50</sup>  
 By which the road is hidden, also hides  
 A cottage from our view ; though I discern  
 (Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees  
 The smokeless chimney-top. —

All unembowered  
And naked stood that lowly Parsonage  
(For such in truth it is, and appertains  
To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)  
When hither came its last Inhabitant.  
Rough and forbidding were the choicest  
roads

By which our northern wilds could then be  
crossed; 60

And into most of these secluded vales  
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.  
So, at his dwelling-place the Priest arrived  
With store of household goods, in panniers  
slung

On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,  
And on the back of more ignoble beast;  
That, with like burthen of effects most  
prized

Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.  
Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight  
years;

But still, methinks, I see them as they  
passed 70

In order, drawing toward their wished-for  
home.

— Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass  
Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised  
freight,

Each in his basket nodding drowsily;  
Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with  
flowers,

Which told it was the pleasant month of  
June;

And, close behind, the comely Matron rode,  
A woman of soft speech and gracious  
smile,

And with a lady's mien. — From far they  
came,

Even from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs  
had been 80

A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered  
By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest;  
And freak put on, and arch word dropped  
— to swell

The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise  
That gathered round the slowly-moving  
train.

— ‘ Whence do they come ? and with what  
errand charged ?

Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe  
Who pitch their tents under the greenwood  
tree ?

Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact  
Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the  
Wood, 90

And, by that whiskered tabby's aid, set  
forth

The lucky venture of sage Whittington,  
When the next village hears the show an-  
nounced

By blast of trumpet ? ’ Plenteous was the  
growth

Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen  
On many a staring countenance portrayed

Of boor or burgher, as they marched along.  
And more than once their steadiness of face

Was put to proof, and exercise supplied  
To their inventive humour, by stern looks,

And questions in authoritative tone, 101  
From some staid guardian of the public

peace,  
Checking the sober steed on which he rode,  
In his suspicious wisdom; oftener still,

By notice indirect, or blunt demand  
From traveller halting in his own despite,

A simple curiosity to ease:  
Of which adventures, that beguiled and

cheered  
Their grave migration, the good pair would  
tell,

With undiminished glee, in hoary age. 110

A Priest he was by function; but his  
course

From his youth up, and high as manhood's  
noon,

( The hour of life to which he then was  
brought )

Had been irregular, I might say, wild;  
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care

Too little checked. An active, ardent mind;  
A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme

To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;  
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games;

A generous spirit, and a body strong 120  
To cope with stoutest champions of the

bowl --  
Had earned for him sure welcome, and the

rights  
Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall  
Of country 'squire; or at the statelier board

Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly  
pompe

Withdrawn, -- to while away the summer  
hours

In condescension among rural guests.

With these high comrades he had revelled  
long,

Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk

By hopes of coming patronage beguiled <sup>130</sup>  
Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier  
aim

Abandoning and all his showy friends,  
For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)  
He turned to this secluded chapelry;  
That had been offered to his doubtful  
choice

By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and  
bare

They found the cottage, their allotted  
home;

Naked without, and rude within; a spot  
With which the Cure not long had been en-  
dowed: <sup>139</sup>

And far remote the chapel stood, — remote,  
And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,  
Save through a gap high in the hills, an  
opening

Shadeless and shelterless, by driving  
showers

Frequented, and beset with howling winds.  
Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might  
hang

On his own mind, to quarrel with the  
choice

Or the necessity that fixed him here:  
Apart from old temptations, and con-  
strained <sup>148</sup>

To punctual labour in his sacred charge.

See him a constant preacher to the poor!

And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,

Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,

The sick in body, or distress in mind;

And, by a salutary change, compelled

To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day  
With no engagement, in his thoughts, more  
proud

Or splendid than his garden could afford,  
His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock  
ranged

Or the wild brooks; from which he now  
returned

Contented to partake the quiet meal <sup>160</sup>

Of his own board, where sat his gentle  
Mate

And three fair Children, plentifully fed  
Though simply, from their little household  
farm;

Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl  
By nature yielded to his practised hand; —

To help the small but certain comings-in  
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less

Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs  
A charitable door.

So days and years  
Passed on; — the inside of that rugged  
house <sup>170</sup>

Was trimmed and brightened by the Ma-  
tron's care,

And gradually enriched with things of price,  
Which might be lacked for use or ornament.

What, though no soft and costly sofa there

Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,

And no vain mirror glittered upon the walls,

Yet were the windows of the low abode

By shutters weather-fenced, which at once

Repelled the storm and deadened its loud  
roar.

There snow-white curtains hung in decent  
folds; <sup>180</sup>

Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain  
plants,

That creep along the ground with sinuous  
trail,

Were nicely braided; and composed a work  
Like Indian mats, that with appropriate

grace

Lay at the threshold and the inner doors;

And a fair carpet, woven of homespun  
wool

But tintured daintily with florid hues,

For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,

Covered the smooth blue slabs of mountain-  
stone

With which the parlour-floor, in simplest  
guise <sup>190</sup>

Of pastoral homesteads, had been long in-  
laid.

Those pleasing works the Housewife's  
skill produced:

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand

Was busier with his task — to rid, to plant,

To rear for food, for shelter, and delight;

A thriving covert! And when wishes,  
formed

In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,

Restored me to my native valley, here

To end my days; well pleased was I to see

The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-  
side, <sup>200</sup>

Screened from assault of every bitter  
blast;

While the dark shadows of the summer  
leaves

Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy  
roof.

Time, which had thus afforded willing  
help

To beautify with nature's fairest growths  
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,  
Upon its Master's frame, a wintry grace;  
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

But how could I say, gently ? for he still  
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm, <sup>210</sup>  
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights  
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.  
Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures  
lost;

Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;  
And still his harsher passions kept their  
hold —

Anger and indignation. Still he loved  
The sound of titled names, and talked in  
glee

Of long-past banquetings with high-born  
friends:

Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight  
Uproused by recollected injury, railed <sup>220</sup>  
At their false ways disdainfully, — and oft  
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye  
Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.

— Those transports, with staid looks of  
pure good-will,

And with soft smile, his consort would re-  
prove.

She, far behind him in the race of years,  
Yet keeping her first mildness, was ad-  
vanced

Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,  
To that still region whither all are bound;  
Him might we liken to the setting sun <sup>230</sup>  
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,  
Struggling and bold, and shining from the  
west

With an inconstant and unmellowed light;  
She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung  
As if with wish to veil the restless orb;  
From which it did itself imbibe a ray  
Of pleasing lustre. — But no more of this;  
I better love to sprinkle on the sod  
That now divides the pair, or rather say,  
That still unites them, praises, like heaven's  
dew, <sup>240</sup>

Without reserve descending upon both.

Our very first in eminence of years  
This old Man stood, the patriarch of the  
Vale !

And, to his unmolested mansion, death  
Had never come, through space of forty  
years;

Sparing both old and young in that abode.

Suddenly then they disappeared: not twice  
Had summer scorched the fields; not twice  
had fallen,

On those high peaks, the first autumnal  
snow,

Before the greedy visiting was closed, <sup>250</sup>  
And the long-privileged house left empty  
— swept

As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague  
Had been among them; all was gentle  
death,

One after one, with intervals of peace.

A happy consummation ! an accord

Sweet, perfect, to be wished for ! save that  
here

Was something which to mortal sense  
might sound

Like harshness, — that the old grey-headed  
Sire,

The oldest, he was taken last; survived  
When the meek Partner of his age, his Son,  
His Daughter, and that late and high-prized  
gift, <sup>261</sup>

His little smiling Grandchild, were no  
more.

' All gone ; all vanished ! he deprived and  
bare,

How will he face the remnant of his life ?  
What will become of him ? ' we said, and  
mused

In sad conjectures — ' Shall we meet him  
now

Haunting with rod and line the craggy  
brooks ?

Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,  
Striving to entertain the lonely hours  
With music ? ' (for he had not ceased to  
touch <sup>270</sup>

The harp or viol which himself had framed,  
For their sweet purposes, with perfect  
skill.)

' What titles will he keep ? will he remain  
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,  
A planter, and a rearer from the seed ?

A man of hope and forward-looking mind  
Even to the last ! ' — Such was he, unsub-  
dued.

But Heaven was gracious; yet a little while,  
And this Survivor, with his cheerful throng  
Of open projects, and his inward hoard <sup>280</sup>  
Of unnumbered griefs, too many and too keen,  
Was overcome by unexpected sleep,  
In one blest moment. Like a shadow  
thrown

Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,  
Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay  
For noontide solace on the summer grass,  
The warm lap of his mother earth: and so,  
Their lenient term of separation past,  
That family (whose graves you there be-  
hold)

By yet a higher privilege once more 290  
Were gathered to each other."

Calm of mind  
And silence waited on these closing words;  
Until the Wanderer (whether moved by  
fear

Lest in those passages of life were some  
That might have touched the sick heart of  
his Friend

Too nearly, or intent to reinforce  
His own firm spirit in degree deprest  
By tender sorrow for our mortal state)  
Thus silence broke: — "Behold a thought-  
less Man

From vice and premature decay preserved  
By useful habits, to a fitter soil 301  
Transplanted ere too late. — The hermit,  
lodged

Amid the untrodden desert, tells his beads,  
With each repeating its allotted prayer,  
And thus divides and thus relieves the  
time;

Smooth task, with *his* compared, whose  
mind could string,

Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread  
Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile  
A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed;  
Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us  
Be the desire — too curiously to ask 311  
How much of this is but the blind result  
Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,  
And what to higher powers is justly due.  
But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring  
vale

A Priest abides before whose life such  
doubts

Fall to the ground; whose gifts of nature  
lie

Retired from notice, lost in attributes  
Of reason, honourably effaced by debts  
Which her poor treasure-house is content to  
owe, 320

And conquest over her dominion gained,  
To which her frowardness must needs sub-  
mit.

In this one Man is shown a temperance —  
proof

Against all trials; industry severe  
And constant as the motion of the day;  
Stern self-denial round him spread, with  
shade

That might be deemed forbidding, did not  
there

All generous feelings flourish and rejoice;  
Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,  
And resolution competent to take 330

Out of the bosom of simplicity  
All that her holy customs recommend,  
And the best ages of the world prescribe.

— Preaching, administering, in every work  
Of his sublime vocation, in the walks  
Of worldly intercourse between man and  
man,

And in his humble dwelling, he appears  
A labourer, with moral virtue girt,  
With spiritual graces, like a glory,  
crowned."

"Doubt can be none," the Pastor said,  
"for whom 340  
This portraiture is sketched. The great,  
the good,

The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise, —  
These titles emperors and chiefs have  
borne,

Honour assumed or given: and him, the  
WONDERFUL,  
Our simple shepherds, speaking from the  
heart,

Deservedly have styled. — From his abode  
In a dependent chapelry that lies  
Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,  
Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,  
And, having once espoused, would never  
quit; 350

Into its graveyard will ere long be borne  
That lowly, great, good Man. A simple  
stone

May cover him; and by its help, perchance,  
A century shall hear his name pronounced,  
With images attendant on the sound;  
Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight  
close

In utter night; and of his course remain  
No cognizable vestiges, no more  
Than of his breath, which shapes itself in  
words

To speak of him, and instantly dissolves."

The Pastor, pressed by thoughts which  
round his theme 361  
Still lingered, after a brief pause, resumed;

"Noise is there not enough in doleful war,  
But that the heaven-born poet must stand  
forth,

And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,  
To multiply and aggravate the din ?  
Pangs are there not enough in hopeless  
love —

And, in requited passion, all too much  
Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear —  
But that the minstrel of the rural shade <sup>370</sup>  
Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse  
The perturbation in the suffering breast,  
And propagate its kind, far as he may ?  
— Ah who (and with such rapture as befits  
The hallowed theme) will rise and celebrate  
The good man's purposes and deeds; re-  
trace

His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,  
His triumphs hail, and glorify his end;  
That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury  
clouds

Through fancy's heat redounding in the  
brain, <sup>380</sup>

And like the soft infections of the heart,  
By charm of measured words may spread  
o'er field,

Hamlet, and town; and piety survive  
Upon the lips of men in hall or bower;  
Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,  
And grave encouragement, by song in-  
spired ?

— Vain thought ! but wherefore murmur or  
repine ?

The memory of the just survives in heaven:  
And, without sorrow, will the ground re-  
ceive

That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best  
Of what lies here confines us to degrees <sup>391</sup>  
In excellence less difficult to reach,  
And milder worth: nor need we travel far  
From those to whom our last regards were  
paid,

For such example.

Almost at the root  
Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare  
And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,  
Oft stretches towards me, like a long  
straight path

Traced faintly in the greensward; there,  
beneath

A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman lies,  
From whom, in early childhood, was with-  
drawn <sup>401</sup>

The precious gift of hearing. He grew up  
From year to year in loneliness of soul;

And this deep mountain-valley was to him  
Soundless, with all its streams. The bird  
of dawn

Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep  
With startling summons; not for his delight  
The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him  
Murmured the labouring bee. When  
stormy winds <sup>409</sup>

Were working the broad bosom of the lake  
Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,  
Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on  
cloud

Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,  
The agitated scene before his eye  
Was silent as a picture: evermore  
Were all things silent, wheresoc'er he  
moved.

Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts  
Upheld, he duteously pursued the round  
Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side  
Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog;  
The plough he guided, and the scythe he  
swayed; <sup>421</sup>

And the ripe corn before his sickle fell  
Among the jocund reapers. For himself,  
All watchful and industrious as he was,  
He wrought not: neither field nor flock he  
owned:

No wish for wealth had place within his  
mind;

Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or  
care.

Though born a younger brother, need  
was none

That from the floor of his paternal home  
He should depart, to plant himself anew.  
And when, mature in manhood, he be-  
held <sup>431</sup>

His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued  
Of rights to him; but he remained well  
pleased,

By the pure bond of independent love,  
An inmate of a second family;  
The fellow-labourer and friend of him  
To whom the small inheritance had fallen.  
— Nor deem that his mild presence was a  
weight

That pressed upon his brother's house; for  
books

Were ready comrades whom he could not  
tire; <sup>440</sup>

Of whose society the blameless Man  
Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,  
Even to old age, with unabated charm

Beguiled his leisure hours; refreshed his thoughts;

Beyond its natural elevation raised  
His introverted spirit; and bestowed  
Upon his life an outward dignity  
Which all acknowledged. The dark winter  
night,

The stormy day, each had its own resource;

Song of the muses, sage historic tale, 450  
Science severe, or word of holy Writ  
Announcing immortality and joy  
To the assembled spirits of just men  
Made perfect, and from injury secure.  
— Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the  
field,

To no perverse suspicion he gave way,  
No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint:

And they, who were about him, did not fail

In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized  
His gentle manners: and his peaceful  
smiles, 460

The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,

Were met with answering sympathy and love.

At length, when sixty years and five were told,

A slow disease insensibly consumed  
The powers of nature: and a few short  
steps

Of friends and kindred bore him from his home

(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)  
To the profounder stillness of the grave.

— Nor was his funeral denied the grace  
Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful  
grief; 470

Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.  
And now that monumental stone preserves

His name, and unambitiously relates  
How long, and by what kindly outward  
aids,

And in what pure contentedness of mind,  
The sad privation was by him endured.

— And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing  
sound

Was wasted on the good Man's living ear,  
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;

And, at the touch of every wandering  
breeze, 480

Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of things!

Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!  
Whose sacred influence, spread through  
earth and heaven,

We all too thanklessly participate,  
Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him  
Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch,  
Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he com-  
plained;

Ask of the channelled rivers if they held  
A safer, easier, more determined course. 490

What terror doth it strike into the mind  
To think of one, blind and alone, advancing  
Straight toward some precipice's airy brink!  
But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed  
his steps,

Protected, say enlightened, by his ear;  
And on the very edge of vacancy

Not more endangered than a man whose  
eye

Beholds the gulf beneath. — No floweret  
blooms

Throughout the lofty range of these rough  
hills,

Nor in the woods, that could from him  
conceal 500

Its birth-place; none whose figure did not  
live

Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth  
Enriched with knowledge his industrious  
mind;

The ocean paid him tribute from the stores  
Lodged in her bosom; and, by science led,

His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.  
— Methinks I see him — how his eye-balls

rolled,  
Beneath his ample brow, in darkness

paired, —  
But each instinct with spirit; and the frame

Of the whole countenance alive with  
thought, 510

Fancy, and understanding; while the voice  
Discoursed of natural or moral truth

With eloquence, and such authentic power,  
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge

stood  
Abashed, and tender pity overawed."

"A noble — and, to unreflecting minds,  
A marvellous spectacle," the Wanderer  
said,

"Beings like these present! But proof  
abounds

Upon the earth that faculties, which seem



Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease to  
be. 520

And to the mind among her powers of  
sense

This transfer is permitted, — not alone  
That the bereft their recompense may win;  
But for remoter purposes of love  
And charity; nor last nor least for this,  
That to the imagination may be given  
A type and shadow of an awful truth;  
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,  
Darkness is banished from the realms of  
death,

By man's imperishable spirit quelled. 530  
Unto the men who see not as we see  
Futurity was thought, in ancient times,  
To be laid open, and they prophesied.  
And know we not that from the blind have  
flowed

The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre;  
And wisdom married to immortal verse ? ”

Among the humbler Worthies, at our feet  
Lying insensible to human praise,  
Love, or regret, — *whose* lineaments would  
next

Have been portrayed, I guess not; but it  
chanced 540

That, near the quiet churchyard where we  
sate,

A team of horses, with a ponderous freight  
Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,  
Whose sharp descent confounded their  
array,  
Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

“ Here,” said the Pastor, “ do we muse,  
and mourn

The waste of death; and lo ! the giant oak  
Stretched on his bier — that massy timber  
wain;

Nor fail to note the Man who guides the  
team.”

He was a peasant of the lowest class: 550  
Grey locks profusely round his temples hung  
In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite  
Of winter cannot thin; the fresh air lodged  
Within his cheek, as light within a cloud;  
And he returned our greeting with a smile.  
When he had passed, the Solitary spake;  
“ A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
And confident to-morrows; with a face  
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
Of Nature's impress, — gaiety and health,

Freedom and hope; but keen, withal, and  
shrewd. 560

His gestures note, — and hark ! his tones of  
voice

Are all vivacious as his mien and looks.”

The Pastor answered: “ You have read  
him well.

Year after year is added to his store  
With *silent* increase: summers, winters —  
past,

Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,  
Ten summers and ten winters of a space  
That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,  
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix 570  
The obligation of an anxious mind,  
A pride in having, or a fear to lose;  
Possessed like outskirts of some large  
domain,

By any one more thought of than by him  
Who holds the land in fee, its careless  
lord !

Yet is the creature rational, endowed  
With foresight; hears, too, every sabbath  
day,

The christian promise with attentive ear;  
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven  
Reject the incense offered up by him, 580  
Though of the kind which beasts and birds  
present

In grove or pasture; cheerfulness of soul,  
From trepidation and repining free.  
How many scrupulous worshippers fall down  
Upon their knees, and daily homage pay  
Less worthy, less religious even, than his !

This qualified respect, the old Man's due,  
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth,”

(Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)

“ I feel at times a motion of despite 590  
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and  
skill,

As you have seen, bear such conspicuous  
part

In works of havoc; taking from these vales,  
One after one, their proudest ornaments.  
Full off his doings leave me to deplore  
Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours  
nursed,

In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;  
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,  
A veil of glory for the ascending moon;  
And oak whose roots by noontide dew were  
damped, 600

And on whose forehead inaccessible

The raven lodged in safety. — Many a ship  
Launched into Morecamb-bay to *him* hath  
owed

Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that  
bears

The loftiest of her pendants; he, from  
park

Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree  
That whirls (how slow itself !) ten thousand  
spindles:

And the vast engine labouring in the mine,  
Content with meaner prowess, must have  
lacked

The trunk and body of its marvellous  
strength, 610

If his undaunted enterprise had failed  
Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,  
A guardian planted to fence off the blast,  
But towering high the roof above, as if  
Its humble destination were forgot —  
That sycamore, which annually holds  
Within its shade, as in a stately tent  
On all sides open to the fanning breeze,  
A grave assemblage, seated while they shear  
The fleeced-encumbered flock — the JOYFUL

ELM, 620  
Around whose trunk the maidens dance in  
May —

And the LORD'S OAK — would plead their  
several rights

In vain, if he were master of their fate;  
His sentence to the axe would doom them  
all.

But, green in age and lusty as he is,  
And promising to keep his hold on earth  
Less, as might seem, in rivalry with men  
Than with the forest's more enduring  
growth,

His own appointed hour will come at last;  
And, like the haughty Spoilers of the  
world, 630

This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must fall.

Now from the living pass we once again:  
From Age," the Priest continued, "turn  
your thoughts;

From Age, that often unlamented drops,  
And mark that daisied hillock, three spans  
long !

— Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the  
board

Of Gold-rill side; and, when the hope had  
ceased

Of other progeny, a Daughter then

Was given, the crowning bounty of the  
whole;

And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy  
Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm 641  
With which by nature every mother's soul  
Is stricken in the moment when her throes  
Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry  
Which tells her that a living child is born;  
And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,  
That the dread storm is weathered by them  
both.

The Father — him at this unlooked-for  
gift

A bolder transport seizes. From the side  
Of his bright hearth, and from his open  
door, 650

Day after day the gladness is diffused  
To all that come, almost to all that pass;  
Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer  
Spread on the never-empty board, and drink  
Health and good wishes to his new-born  
girl,

From cups replenished by his joyous hand.  
— Those seven fair brothers variously were  
moved

Each by the thoughts best suited to his  
years:

But most of all and with most thankful  
mind 659

The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched;  
A happiness that ebb'd not, but remained  
To fill the total measure of his soul !

— From the low tenement, his own abode,  
Whither, as to a little private cell,  
He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and  
noise,

To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,  
Once every day he duteously repaired  
To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe:

For in that female infant's name he heard  
The silent name of his departed wife; 670

Heart-stirring music ! hourly heard that  
name;

Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret  
Green,'

Offt did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill side.'

Oh ! pang unthought of, as the precious  
boon

Itself had been unlooked-for; oh ! dire  
stroke

Of desolating anguish for them all !

— Just as the Child could totter on the  
floor.

And, by some friendly finger's help up-  
 stayed,  
 Range round the garden walk, while she  
 perchance  
 Was catching at some novelty of spring, 680  
 Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its  
 cell  
 Drawn by the sunshine — at that hopeful  
 season  
 The winds of March, smiting insidiously,  
 Raised in the tender passage of the throat  
 Viewless obstruction; whence, all unfore-  
 warned,  
 The household lost their pride and soul's  
 delight.  
 — But time hath power to soften all re-  
 grets,  
 And prayer and thought can bring to worst  
 distress  
 Due resignation. Therefore, though some  
 tears 689  
 Fail not to spring from either Parent's eye  
 Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,  
 Yet this departed Little-one, too long  
 The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps  
 In what may now be called a peaceful bed.

On a bright day -- so calm and bright, it  
 seemed  
 To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-fair —  
 These mountains echoed to an unknown  
 sound;  
 A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse  
 Let down into the hollow of that grave,  
 Whose shelving sides are red with naked  
 mould. 700  
 Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth !  
 Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these  
 sods,  
 That they may knit together, and therewith  
 Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness !  
 Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss.  
 Dear Youth, by young and old alike be-  
 loved,  
 To me as precious as my own ! -- Green  
 herbs  
 May creep (I wish that they would softly  
 creep)  
 Over thy last abode, and we may pass  
 Reminded less imperiously of thee; — 710  
 The ridge itself may sink into the breast  
 Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;  
 Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our  
 hearts,  
 Thy image disappear !

The Mountain-ash  
 No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove  
 Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head  
 Decked with autumnal berries, that out-  
 shine  
 Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may have  
 marked,

By a brook-side or solitary tarn, 719  
 How she her station doth adorn: the pool  
 Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks  
 Are brightened round her. In his native  
 vale

Such and so glorious did this Youth appear;  
 A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts  
 By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam  
 Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,  
 By all the graces with which nature's hand  
 Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards  
 Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,  
 Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form: 730  
 Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the  
 shade

Discovered in their own despite to sense  
 Of mortals (if such fables without blame  
 May find chance-mention on this sacred  
 ground)

So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,  
 And through the impediment of rural cares,  
 In him revealed a scholar's genius shone;  
 And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,  
 In him the spirit of a hero walked  
 Our unpretending valley. — How the quoit  
 Whizzed from the Stripling's arm ! If  
 touched by him, 741  
 The inglorious foot-ball mounted to the  
 pitch

Of the lark's flight, — or shaped a rainbow  
 curve,

Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field !  
 The indefatigable fox had learned  
 To dread his perseverance in the chase.  
 With admiration would he lift his eyes  
 To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand  
 Was loth to assault the majesty he loved:  
 Else had the strongest fastnesses proved  
 weak 750

To guard the royal brood. The sailing  
 glead,  
 The wheeling swallow, and the darting  
 snipe;  
 The sportive sea-gull dancing with the  
 waves,  
 And cautious water-fowl, from distant  
 climes,

Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mere;

Were subject to young Oswald's steady  
aim,  
And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast  
Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his  
threats;

Our Country marked the preparation vast  
Of hostile forces; and she called — with  
voice

That filled her plains, that reached her ut-  
most shores,

And in remotest vales was heard — to  
arms!

— Then, for the first time, here you might  
have seen

The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet  
changed,

That flashed uncouthly through the woods  
and fields.

Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,  
And graced with shining weapons, weekly  
marched,

From this lone valley, to a central spot  
Where, in assemblage with the flower and  
choice

Of the surrounding district, they might  
learn

The rudiments of war; ten — hardy, strong,  
And valiant; but young Oswald, like a  
chief

And yet a modest comrade, led them forth  
From their shy solitude, to face the world,  
With a gay confidence and seemly pride;  
Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet  
Like Youths released from labour, and yet  
bound

To most laborious service, though to them  
A festival of unencumbered ease;

The inner spirit keeping holiday, <sup>780</sup>  
Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

Oft have I marked him, at some leisure  
hour,

Stretched on the grass, or seated in the  
shade,

Among his fellows, while an ample map  
Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,  
From which the gallant teacher would dis-  
course,

Now pointing this way, and now that, —  
'Here flows,'

Thus would he say, 'the Rhine, that famous  
stream!

Eastward, the Danube toward this inland  
sea,

A mightier river, winds from realm to  
realm;

And, like a serpent, shows his glittering  
back <sup>790</sup>

Bespotted — with innumerable isles:

Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk;  
observe

His capital city! 'Thence, along a tract  
Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,

His finger moved, distinguishing the spots  
Where wide-spread conflict then most

fiercely raged;

Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields

On which the sons of mighty Germany  
Were taught a base submission — 'Here

behold <sup>800</sup>

A nobler race, the Switzers, and their  
land,

Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge  
woods,

And mountains white with everlasting  
snow!

— And, surely, he, that spake with kindling  
brow,

Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best  
Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,

Have fought and perished for Helvetia's  
rights —

Ah, not in vain! — or those who, in old  
time,

For work of happier issue, to the side  
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand

huts, <sup>810</sup>

When he had risen alone! No braver  
Youth

Descended from Judean heights, to march  
With righteous Joshua; nor appeared in

arms

When grove was felled, and altar was cast  
down,

And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-in-  
flamed,

And strong in hatred of idolatry."

The Pastor, even as if by these last words  
Raised from his seat within the chosen

shade,  
Moved toward the grave; — instinctively his

steps

We followed; and my voice with joy ex-  
claimed: <sup>820</sup>

"Power to the Oppressors of the world is  
given,

A might of which they dream not. Oh!

the curse,

To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,  
 Father and founder of exalted deeds;  
 And, to whole nations bound in servile  
     straits,

The liberal donor of capacities  
 More than heroic ! this to be, nor yet  
 Have sense of one connatural wish, nor  
     yet

Deserve the least return of human thanks;  
 Winning no recompense but deadly hate <sup>830</sup>  
 With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn ! ”

When this involuntary strain had ceased,  
 The Pastor said: “ So Providence is served;  
 The forked weapon of the skies can send  
 Illumination into deep, dark holds,  
 Which the mild sunbeam hath not power  
     to pierce.

Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and  
     cast

Pity away, soon shall ye quake with *fear* !  
 For, not unconscious of the mighty debt  
 Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer  
     owes, <sup>840</sup>

Europe, through all her habitable bounds,  
 Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who yet  
 Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,  
 By horror of their impious rites, preserved;  
 Are still permitted to extend their pride,  
 Like cedars on the top of Lebanon  
 Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,  
 And love ‘ all hoping and expecting all,’  
 This hallowed grave demands, where rests  
     in peace

A humble champion of the better cause, <sup>850</sup>  
 A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he asked  
 No higher name; in whom our country  
     showed,

As in a favourite son, most beautiful.  
 In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,  
 Spread with the spreading of her wealthy  
     arts,

England, the ancient and the free, appeared  
 In him to stand before my swimming eyes,  
 Unconquerably virtuous and secure.

— No more of this, lest I offend his dust:  
 Short was his life, and a brief tale re-  
     mains. <sup>860</sup>

One day — a summer’s day of annual  
     pomp  
 And solemn chase — from morn to sultry  
     noon  
 His steps had followed, fleetest of the fleet,

The red-deer driven along its native heights  
 With cry of hound and horn; and, from  
     that toil

Returned with sinews weakened and re-  
     laxed,

This generous Youth, too negligent of self,  
 Plunged — ‘ mid a gay and busy throng con-  
     vened

To wash the fleeces of his Father’s flock —  
 Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire  
 Seized him, that self-same night; and  
     through the space <sup>871</sup>

Of twelve ensuing days his frame was  
     wrenched,

Till nature rested from her work in death.  
 To him, thus snatched away, his comrades  
     paid

A soldier’s honours. At his funeral hour  
 Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless  
     blue —

A golden lustre slept upon the hills;  
 And if by chance a stranger, wandering  
     there,

From some commanding eminence had  
     looked

Down on this spot, well pleased would he  
     have seen <sup>880</sup>

A glittering spectacle; but every face  
 Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been  
     moist

With tears, that wept not then; nor were  
     the few,

Who from their dwellings came not forth  
     to join

In this sad service, less disturbed than we.  
 They started at the tributary peal

Of instantaneous thunder, which announced,  
 Through the still air, the closing of the  
     Grave;

And distant mountains echoed with a sound  
 Of lamentation, never heard before ! ” <sup>890</sup>

The Pastor ceased. — My venerable  
     Friend

Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;  
 And, when that eulogy was ended, stood

Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived  
 The prolongation of some still response,

Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,  
 The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,

Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,  
 Its rights and virtues — by that Deity

Descending, and supporting his pure  
     heart <sup>900</sup>

With patriotic confidence and joy.

And, at the last of those memorial words,  
The pining Solitary turned aside;  
Whether through manly instinct to conceal  
Tender emotions spreading from the heart  
To his worn cheek; or with uneasy shame  
For those cold humours of habitual spleen  
That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man  
Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes  
urged

To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue. 910  
— Right toward the sacred Edifice his steps  
Had been directed; and we saw him now  
Intent upon a monumental stone,  
Whose uncouth form was grafted on the  
wall,

Or rather seemed to have grown into the  
side

Of the rude pile; as oft-times trunks of  
trees,

Where nature works in wild and craggy  
spots,

Are seen incorporate with the living rock —  
To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note  
Of his employment, with a courteous  
smile 920

Exclaimed —

“The sagest Antiquarian’s eye  
That task would foil;” then, letting fall his  
voice

While he advanced, thus spake: “Tradition  
tells

That, in Eliza’s golden days, a Knight  
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,  
And fixed his home in this sequestered  
vale.

’T is left untold if here he first drew breath,  
Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,  
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing  
thought

I sometimes entertain, that haply bound 930  
To Scotland’s court in service of his Queen,  
Or sent on mission to some northern Chief  
Of England’s realm, this vale he might  
have seen

With transient observation; and thence  
caught

An image fair, which, brightening in his  
soul

When joy of war and pride of chivalry  
Languished beneath accumulated years,  
Had power to draw him from the world,  
resolved

To make that paradise his chosen home  
To which his peaceful fancy oft had  
turned. 940

Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief  
may rest

Upon unwritten story fondly traced  
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat  
The Knight arrived, with spear and shield,  
and borne

Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked  
With brodered housings. And the lofty  
Steed —

His sole companion, and his faithful friend,  
Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range  
In fertile pastures — was beheld with eyes  
Of admiration and delightful awe, 950  
By those untraveller Dalesmen. With less  
pride,

Yet free from touch of envious discontent,  
They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,

Like a bright star, amid the lowly band  
Of their rude homesteads. Here the

Warrior dwelt;

And, in that mansion, children of his own,  
Or kindred, gathered round him. As a  
tree

That falls and disappears, the house is  
gone;

And, through improvidence or want of love  
For ancient worth and honourable things, 960  
The spear and shield are vanished, which  
the Knight

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch  
Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains  
Of that foundation in domestic care

Raised by his hands. And now no trace is  
left

Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this  
stone,

Faithless memorial! and his family name  
Borne by yon clustering cottages, that  
sprang

From out the ruins of his stately lodge:  
These, and the name and title at full  
length, — 970

Sir Alfred Tithing, with appropriate words  
Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath

Or posy, girding round the several fronts  
Of three clear-sounding and harmonious  
bells,

That in the steeple hang, his pious gift.”

“So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and  
dies,”

The grey-haired Wanderer pensively ex-  
claimed,

“All that this world is proud of. From  
their spheres

The stars of human glory are cast down;  
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,  
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and  
palms 981

Of all the mighty, withered and consumed !  
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence  
Long to protect her own. The man him-  
self

Departs; and soon is spent the line of  
those

Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,  
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,  
Did most resemble him. Degrees and  
ranks,

Fraternities and orders — heaping high  
New wealth upon the burthen of the old, 990  
And placing trust in privilege confirmed  
And re-confirmed — are scoffed at with a  
smile

Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand  
Of Desolation, aimed: to slow decline  
These yield, and these to sudden over-  
throw:

Their virtue, service, happiness, and state  
Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of  
green,

Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps  
Their monuments and their memory. The  
vast Frame

Of social nature changes evermore 1000  
Her organs and her members, with decay  
Restless, and restless generation, powers  
And functions dying and produced at  
need, —

And by this law the mighty whole subsists:  
With an ascent and progress in the main;  
Yet, oh ! how disproportioned to the hopes  
And expectations of self-flattering minds !

The courteous Knight, whose bones are  
here interred,  
Lived in an age conspicuous as our own  
For strife and ferment in the minds of  
men; 1010

Whence alteration in the forms of things,  
Various and vast. A memorable age !  
Which did to him assign a pensive lot —  
To linger 'mid the last of those bright  
clouds

That, on the steady breeze of honour,  
sailed

In long procession calm and beautiful.  
He who had seen his own bright order  
fade,  
And its devotion gradually decline,

(While war, relinquishing the lance and  
shield,

Her temper changed, and bowed to other  
laws) 1020

Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,  
That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,  
In town and city and sequestered glen,  
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn  
roof,

And old religious house — pile after pile;  
And shook their tenants out into the fields,  
Like wild beasts without home ! Their hour  
was come;

But why no softening thought of grati-  
tude,

No just remembrance, scruple, or wise  
doubt ?

Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help, 1030  
Save at worst need, from bold impetuous  
force,

Fittest allied to anger and revenge.

But Human-kind rejoices in the might

Of mutability; and airy hopes,

Dancing around her, hinder and disturb

Those meditations of the soul that feed

The retrospective virtues. Festive songs

Break from the maddened nations at the  
sight

Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect

Is the sure consequence of slow decay. 1040

Even," said the Wanderer, "as that  
courteous Knight,

Bound by his vow to labour for redress

Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact

By sword and lance the law of gentleness,

(If I may venture of myself to speak,

Trusting that not incongruously I blend

Low things with lofty) I too shall be  
doomed

To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem

Of the poor calling which my youth em-  
braced

With no unworthy prospect. But enough;  
— Thoughts crowd upon me — and 't were  
scenlier now. 1051

To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher  
thanks

For the pathetic records which his voice

Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt  
truth,

Tending to patience when affliction strikes;

To hope and love; to confident repose

In God; and reverence for the dust of  
Man."

## BOOK EIGHTH

## THE PARSONAGE

## ARGUMENT

Pastor's apology and apprehensions that he might have detained his Auditors too long, with the Pastor's invitation to his house — Solitary disinclined to comply — Rallies the Wanderer — And playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the Knight-errant — Which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the manufacturing spirit — Favourable effects — The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes — Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth — Physical science unable to support itself — Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler Classes of Society — Picture of a Child employed in a Cotton-mill — Ignorance and degradation of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed — Conversation broken off by a renewed Invitation from the Pastor — Path leading to his House — Its appearance described — His Daughter — His Wife — His Son (a Boy) enters with his Companion — Their happy appearance — The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale  
To those acknowledgments subscribed his own.

With a sedate compliance, which the Priest  
Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and said: —

“ If ye, by whom invited I began  
These narratives of calm and humble life,  
Be satisfied, 'tis well, — the end is gained;  
And, in return for sympathy bestowed  
And patient listening, thanks accept from me.

— Life, death, eternity! momentous themes  
Are they — and might demand a seraph's tongue,

Were they not equal to their own support;  
And therefore no incompetence of mine  
Could do them wrong. The universal forms

Of human nature, in a spot like this,  
Present themselves at once to all men's view:

Ye wished for act and circumstance, that make

The individual known and understood;  
And such as my best judgment could select

From what the place afforded, have been given;

Though apprehensions crossed me that my zeal

To his might well be likened, who unlocks  
A cabinet stored with gems and pictures — draws

His treasures forth, soliciting regard  
To this, and this, as worthier than the last,  
Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased  
More than the exhibitor himself, becomes  
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.  
— But let us hence! my dwelling is in sight,  
And there — ”

At this the Solitary shrunk  
With backward will; but, wanting not address

That inward motion to disguise, he said  
To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;  
— “ The peaceable remains of this good Knight

Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful scorn,

If consciousness could reach him where he lies

That one, albeit of these degenerate times,  
Deploping changes past, or dreading change  
Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in thought,

The fine vocation of the sword and lance  
With the gross aims and body-bending toil  
Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth  
Pitied, and, where they are not known,  
despised.

Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the two estates

Are graced with some resemblance. Errant those,

Exiles and wanderers — and the like are these;

Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and dale,

Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.

— What though no higher recompense be sought

Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil  
Full oft procured, yet may they claim respect,

Among the intelligent, for what this course  
Enables them to be and to perform.

Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,  
While solitude permits the mind to feel;  
Instructs, and prompts her to supply defects



By the division of her inward self  
For grateful converse: and to these poor  
men

Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)  
Is bountiful — go wheresoe'er they may; 60  
Kind nature's various wealth is all their own.  
Versed in the characters of men; and bound,  
By ties of daily interest, to maintain  
Conciliatory manners and smooth speech;  
Such have been, and still are in their degree,  
Examples efficacious to refine  
Rude intercourse; apt agents to expel,  
By importation of unlooked-for arts,  
Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;  
Raising, through just gradation, savage life  
To rustic, and the rustic to urbane. 71  
— Within their moving magazines is lodged  
Power that comes forth to quicken and ex-  
alt

Affections seated in the mother's breast,  
And in the lover's fancy; and to feed  
The sober sympathies of long-tryed friends.  
— By these Itinerants, as experienced men,  
Counsel is given; contention they appease  
With gentle language; in remotest wilds,  
Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings  
bring; 80  
Could the proud quest of chivalry do more?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer, "they  
who gain

A panegyric from your generous tongue!  
But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained  
Aught of romantic interest, it is gone.  
Their purer service, in this realm at least,  
Is past for ever. — An inventive Age  
Has wrought, if not with speed of magic,  
yet

To most strange issues. I have lived to  
mark

A new and unforeseen creation rise 90  
From out the labours of a peaceful Land  
Wielding her potent enginery to frame  
And to produce, with appetite as keen  
As that of war, which rests not night or day,  
Industrious to destroy! With fruitless  
pains

Might one like me *now* visit many a tract  
Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,  
A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,  
Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he  
came —

Among the tenantry of thorp and vill; 100  
Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter  
proud,

And dignified by battlements and towers  
Of some stern castle, mouldering on the  
brow

Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.  
The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-  
track wild,

And formidable length of plashy lane,  
(Prized avenues ere others had been shaped  
Or easier links connecting place with place)  
Have vanished — swallowed up by stately  
roads

Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom 110  
Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth has  
lent

Her waters, Air her breezes; and the sail  
Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,  
Glistening along the low and woody dale;  
Or, in its progress, on the lofty side,  
Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned from  
far.

Meanwhile, at social Industry's com-  
mand,

How quick, how vast an increase! From  
the germ

Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced  
Here a huge town, continuous and compact,  
Hiding the face of earth for leagues — and  
there, 121

Where not a habitation stood before,  
Abodes of men irregularly massed

Like trees in forests, — spread through  
spacious tracts,

O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires  
Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths  
Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.

And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his  
steps,

He sees the barren wilderness crased,  
Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims 130

How much the mild Directress of the plough  
Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!

— Hence is the wide sea peopled, — hence  
the shores

Of Britain are resorted to by ships  
Freighted from every climate of the world

With the world's choicest produce. Hence  
that sun

Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,  
Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;

That animating spectacle of sails  
That, through her inland regions, to and  
fro 140

Pass with the respirations of the tide,  
Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,

Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice  
Of thunder daunting those who would approach

With hostile purposes the blessed Isle,  
Truth's consecrated residence, the seat  
Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock  
Faithfully watched, and, by that loving care  
And Heaven's good providence, preserved  
from taint! <sup>150</sup>

With you I grieve, when on the darker side  
Of this great change I look; and there behold

Such outrage done to nature as compels  
The indignant power to justify herself;  
Yea, to avenge her violated rights,  
For England's bane. — When soothing darkness spreads

O'er hill and vale," the Wanderer thus expressed

His recollections, "and the punctual stars,  
While all things else are gathering to their homes,

Advance, and in the firmament of heaven <sup>160</sup>  
Glitter — but undisturbing, undisturbed;  
As if their silent company were charged  
With peaceful admonitions for the heart  
Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful lord;

Then, in full many a region, once like this  
The assured domain of calm simplicity  
And pensive quiet, an unnatural light  
Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes  
Breaks from a many-windowed fabric huge;  
And at the appointed hour a bell is heard —  
Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll <sup>171</sup>  
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest

A local summons to unceasing toil!  
Disgorged are now the ministers of day;  
And, as they issue from the illumined pile,  
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door —

And in the courts — and where the rumbling stream,

That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,  
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed  
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths, <sup>180</sup>

Mother and little children, boys and girls,  
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes  
Within this temple, where is offered up  
To Gain, the master idol of the realm,  
Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old

Our ancestors, within the still domain  
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,  
Their vigils kept; where tapers day and night

On the dim altar burned continually,  
In token that the House was evermore <sup>190</sup>  
Watching to God. Religious men were they;

Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire  
Above this transitory world, allow  
That there should pass a moment of the year,

When in their land the Almighty's service ceased.

Triumph who will in these profaner rites  
Which we, a generation self-extolled,  
As zealously perform! I cannot share  
His proud complacency: — yet do I exult, <sup>200</sup>  
Casting reserve away, exult to see  
An intellectual mastery exercised  
O'er the blind elements; a purpose given,  
A perseverance fed; almost a soul  
Imparted — to brute matter. I rejoice,  
Measuring the force of those gigantic powers

That, by the thinking mind, have been compelled

To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.  
For with the sense of admiration blends  
The animating hope that time may come  
When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by the night <sup>210</sup>

Of this dominion over nature gained,  
Men of all lands shall exercise the same  
In due proportion to their country's need;  
Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,

All praise, all safety, and all happiness,  
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,  
Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,  
Palmyra, central in the desert, fell;  
And the Arts died by which they had been raised.

— Call Archimedes from his buried tomb  
Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse, <sup>221</sup>  
And feelingly the Sage shall make report  
How insecure, how baseless in itself,  
Is the Philosophy whose sway depends  
On mere material instruments; — how weak  
Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropped

By virtue. — He, sighing with pensive grief,  
Amid his calm abstractions, would admit

That not the slender privilege is theirs  
To save themselves from blank forgetful-  
ness ! " 230

When from the Wanderer's lips these  
words had fallen,  
I said, " And, did in truth those vaunted  
Arts

Possess such privilege, how could we escape  
Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,  
And would preserve as things above all  
price,

The old domestic morals of the land,  
Her simple manners, and the stable worth  
That dignified and cheered a low estate ?  
Oh ! where is now the character of peace,  
Sobriety, and order, and chaste love, 240  
And honest dealing, and untainted speech,  
And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer ;  
That made the very thought of country-  
life

A thought of refuge, for a mind detained  
Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd ?  
Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept  
With conscientious reverence, as a day  
By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced  
Holy and blest ? and where the winning  
grace

Of all the lighter ornaments attached 250  
To time and season, as the year rolled  
round ? "

" Fled ! " was the Wanderer's passionate  
response,

" Fled utterly ! or only to be traced  
In a few fortunate retreats like this ;  
Which I behold with trembling, when I  
think

What lamentable change, a year — a  
month —

May bring ; that brook converting as it  
runs

Into an instrument of deadly bane  
For those, who, yet untempted to forsake  
The simple occupations of their sires, 260  
Drink the pure water of its innocent stream  
With lip almost as pure. — Domestic bliss  
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)   
How art thou blighted for the poor Man's  
heart !

Lo ! in such neighbourhood, from morn to  
eve,

The habitations empty ! or perchance  
The Mother left alone, — no helping hand  
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe ;

No daughters round her, busy at the  
wheel,

Or in dispatch of each day's little growth  
Of household occupation ; no nice arts 271  
Of needle-work ; no bustle at the fire,

Where once the dinner was prepared with  
pride ;

Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the  
mind ;

Nothing to praise, to teach, or to com-  
mand !

The Father, if perchance he still retain  
His old employments, goes to field or  
wood,

No longer led or followed by the Sons ;  
Idlers perchance they were, — but in *his*  
sight ;

Breathing fresh air, and treading the green  
earth : 280

" Till their short holiday of childhood  
ceased,

Ne'er to return ! That birthright now is  
lost.

Economists will tell you that the State  
Thrives by the forfeiture — unfeeling  
thought,

And false as monstrous ! Can the mother  
thrive

By the destruction of her innocent sons  
In whom a premature necessity

Blocks out the forms of nature, precon-  
sumes

The reason, furnishes the heart, shuts up  
The infant Being in itself, and makes 290

Its very spring a season of decay !

The lot is wretched, the condition sad,  
Whether a pining discontent survive,

And thirst for change ; or habit hath sub-  
dued

The soul deprest, dejected — even to love  
Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

Oh, banish far such wisdom as condemns  
A native Briton to these inward chains,  
Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep ;  
Without his own consent, or knowledge,  
fixed ! 300

He is a slave to whom release comes not,  
And cannot come. The boy, where'er he  
turns,

Is still a prisoner ; when the wind is up  
Among the clouds, and roars through the  
ancient woods ;

Or when the sun is shining in the east,

Quiet and calm. Behold him — in the school

Of his attainments ? no ; but with the air  
Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.

His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-flakes

Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes. 310

Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,

His respiration quick and audible ;  
And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam  
Could break from out those languid eyes,  
or a blush

Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,  
Is that the countenance, and such the port,  
Of no mean Being ? One who should be clothed

With dignity befitting his proud hope ;  
Who, in his very childhood, should appear  
Sublime from present purity and joy ! 320

The limbs increase ; but liberty of mind  
Is gone for ever ; and this organic frame,  
So joyful in its motions, is become  
Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead ;  
And even the touch, so exquisitely poured  
Through the whole body, with a languid will

Performs its functions ; rarely competent  
To impress a vivid feeling on the mind  
Of what there is delightful in the breeze,  
The gentle visitations of the sun, 330  
Or lapse of liquid element — by hand,  
Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth — perceived.

— Can hope look forward to a manhood raised

On such foundations ? ”

“ Hope is none for him ! ”  
The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed,  
“ And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep.

Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,  
If there were not, before those arts appeared,

These structures rose, commingling old and young,

And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint ;  
If there were not, *then*, in our far-famed Isle, 341

Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed  
Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large ;  
Yet walked beneath the sun, in human shape,

As abject, as degraded ? At this day,  
Who shall enumerate the crazy huts  
And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth  
A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair  
Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear ;  
Or wearing, (shall we say ?) in that white growth 350

An ill-adjusted turban, for defence  
Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-burnt brows,

By savage Nature ? Shrivelled are their lips,

Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet  
On which they stand ; as if thereby they drew

Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,

From earth, the common mother of us all.  
Figure and mien, complexion and attire,  
Are leagued to strike dismay ; but outstretched hand

And whining voice denote them supplicants  
For the least boon that pity can bestow. 361  
Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found ;

And with their parents occupy the skirts  
Of furze-clad commons ; such are born and reared

At the mine's mouth under impending rocks ;

Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave ;  
Or where their ancestors erected huts,  
For the convenience of unlawful gain,  
In forest purlieus ; and the like are bred,  
All England through, where nooks and slips of ground 370

Purloined, in times less jealous than our own,

From the green margin of the public way,  
A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom  
And gaiety of cultivated fields.  
Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)  
Do I remember oft-times to have seen  
'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earnest watch,

Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand ;  
Then, following closely with the cloud of dust,

An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone 380  
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.

— Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin,

And, on the freight of merry passengers  
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed ;  
And spin — and pant — and overhead again,

Wild pursuivants ! until their breath is lost,  
Or bounty tires — and every face, that  
smiled

Encouragement, hath ceased to look that  
way.

— But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,  
These, bred to little pleasure in them-  
selves,

Are profitless to others.

Turn we then  
To Britons born and bred within the pale  
Of civil polity, and early trained  
To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,  
The bread they eat. A sample should I  
give

Of what this stock hath long produced to  
enrich

The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,  
‘Is this the whistling plough-boy whose  
shrill notes

Impart new gladness to the morning air !’  
Forgive me if I venture to suspect

That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,  
Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints;

Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees  
Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,  
Fellows to those that lustily upheld

The wooden stools for everlasting use,  
Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his  
brow

Under whose shaggy canopy are set  
Two eyes — not dim, but of a healthy  
stare —

Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and  
strange —

Proclaiming boldly that they never drew  
A look or motion of intelligence

From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-  
row,

Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,  
Till perfect mastery crown the pains at  
last.

— What kindly warmth from touch of  
fostering hand,

What penetrating power of sun or breeze,  
Shall e’er dissolve the crust wherein his  
soul

Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice ?  
This torpor is no pitiable work

Of modern ingenuity; no town  
Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught

Of sottish vice or desperate breach of  
law,

To which (and who can tell where or how  
soon ?)

He may be roused. This Boy the fields  
produce:

His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering  
scythe,

The carter’s whip, that on his shoulder rests  
In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,

The sceptre of his sway; his country’s  
name,

Her equal rights, her churches and her  
schools —

What have they done for him ? And, let  
me ask,

For tens of thousands uninformed as he ?  
In brief, what liberty of *mind* is here ? ”

This ardent sally pleased the mild good  
Man,

To whom the appeal couched in its closing  
words

Was pointedly addressed; and to the  
thoughts

That, in assent or opposition, rose  
Within his mind, he seemed prepared to  
give

Prompt utterance; but the Vicar interposed  
With invitation urgently renewed.

— We followed, taking as he led, a path  
Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,

Whose flexile boughs low bending with a  
weight

Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and  
roots

That gave them nourishment. When frosty  
winds

Howl from the north, what kindly warmth,  
methought,

Is here — how grateful this impervious  
screen !

— Not shaped by simple wearing of the  
foot

On rural business passing to and fro  
Was the commodious walk: a careful

hand

Had marked the line, and strewn its sur-  
face o’er

With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights  
Fetched by a neighbouring brook. — Across

the vale  
The stately fence accompanied our steps;

And thus the pathway, by perennial green  
Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to

unite,  
As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,

The Pastor’s mansion with the house of  
prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined  
With feminine allurement soft and fair, <sup>460</sup>  
The mansion's self displayed; — a reverend  
pile

With bold projections and recesses deep;  
Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood  
Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to  
admire

The pillared porch, elaborately embossed;  
The low wide windows with their mullions  
old;

The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone;  
And that smooth slope from which the  
dwelling rose,

By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers  
And flowering shrubs, protected and  
adorned: <sup>470</sup>

Profusion bright! and every flower assum-  
ing

A more than natural vividness of hue,  
From unaffected contrast with the gloom  
Of sober cypress, and the darker foil  
Of yew, in which survived some traces,  
here

Not unbecoming, of grotesque device  
And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof  
Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,  
Blending their diverse foliage with the  
green

Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped  
The huge round chimneys, harbour of  
delight <sup>481</sup>

For wren and redbreast, — where they sit  
and sing

Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.  
Nor must I leave untouched (the picture  
else

Were incomplete) a relique of old times  
Happily spared, a little Gothic niche  
Of nicest workmanship; that once had held  
The sculptured image of some patron-saint,  
Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down  
On all who entered those religious doors. <sup>490</sup>

But lo! where from the rocky garden-  
mount  
Crowned by its antique summer-house —  
descends,

Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;  
For she hath recognised her honoured  
friend,

The Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt  
kiss

The gladsome Child bestows at his request;  
And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,

Hangs on the old Man with a happy look,  
And with a pretty restless hand of love.

We enter — by the Lady of the place <sup>500</sup>  
Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:  
A lofty stature undepressed by time,  
Whose visitation had not wholly spared  
The finer lineaments of form and face;  
To that complexion brought which prudence  
trusts in

And wisdom loves. — But when a stately  
ship

Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast  
On homeward voyage, what — if wind and  
wave,

And hardship undergone in various climes,  
Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,  
And that full trim of inexperienced hope <sup>511</sup>  
With which she left her haven — not for  
this,

Should the sun strike her, and the impartial  
breeze

Play on her streamers, fails she to assume  
Brightness and touching beauty of her own,  
That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair,  
appeared

This goodly Matron, shining in the beams  
Of unexpected pleasure. — Soon the board  
Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we be-  
guiled <sup>520</sup>

The mid-day hours with desultory talk;  
From trivial themes to general argument  
Passing, as accident or fancy led,  
Or courtesy prescribed. While question  
rose

And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve  
Dropping from every mind, the Solitary  
Resumed the manners of his happier days;  
And in the various conversation bore  
A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;  
Yet with the grace of one who in the  
world <sup>530</sup>

Had learned the art of pleasing, and had  
now

Occasion given him to display his skill,  
Upon the steadfast 'vantage-ground of truth.  
He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,  
Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale,  
Seen, from the shady room in which we  
sate,

In softened perspective; and more than  
once

Praised the consummate harmony serene  
Of gravity and elegance, diffused

Around the mansion and its whole domain;<sup>540</sup>

Not, doubtless, without help of female taste  
And female care. — "A blessed lot is yours!"  
The words escaped his lip, with a tender  
sigh

Breathed over them: but suddenly the door  
Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys  
Appeared, confusion checking their delight.  
— Not brothers they in feature or attire,  
But fond companions, so I guessed, in field,  
And by the river's margin — whence they  
come,

Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated.<sup>550</sup>  
One bears a willow-pannier on his back,  
The boy of plainer garb, whose blush sur-  
vives

More deeply tinged. Twin might the other  
be

To that fair girl who from the garden-mount  
Bounded: — triumphant entry this for him!  
Between his hands he holds a smooth blue  
stone,

On whose capacious surface see outspread  
Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted  
trouts;

Ranged side by side, and lessening by  
degrees

Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.<sup>560</sup>  
Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone  
With its rich freight; their number he pro-  
claims;

Tells from what pool the noblest had been  
dragged;

And where the very monarch of the brook,  
After long struggle, had escaped at last -  
Stealing alternately at them and us

(As doth his comrade too) a look of pride.  
And, verily, the silent creatures made  
A splendid sight, together thus exposed;

Dead — but not sullied or deformed by  
death,<sup>570</sup>

That seemed to pity what he could not spare.

But oh, the animation in the mien  
Of those two boys! yea in the very words  
With which the young narrator was in-  
spired,

When, as our questions led, he told at large  
Of that day's prowess! Him might I com-  
pare,

His looks, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,  
To a bold brook that splits for better speed,  
And at the self-same moment, works its way  
Through many channels, ever and anon<sup>580</sup>

Parted and re-united: his compeer  
To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight  
As beautiful — as grateful to the mind.

— But to what object shall the lovely Girl  
Be likened? She whose countenance and  
air

Unite the graceful qualities of both,  
Even as she shares the pride and joy of  
both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved; his  
vivid eye

Glistened with tenderness; his mind, I  
knew,

Was full; and had, I doubted not, re-  
turned,<sup>590</sup>

Upon this impulse, to the theme — erewhile  
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys

Withdrew, on summons to their well-earned  
meal;

And He — to whom all tongues resigned  
their rights

With willingness, to whom the general ear  
Listened with readier patience than to  
strain

Of music, lute or harp, a long delight  
That ceased not when his voice had ceased  
— as One

Who from truth's central point serenely  
views

The compass of his argument — began<sup>600</sup>  
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

## BOOK NINTH

### DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE

#### ARGUMENT

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat the human soul — How lively this principle is in Childhood — Hence the delight in old Age of looking back upon Childhood — The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted — These not to be looked for generally but under a just government — Right of a human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere Instrument — The condition of multitudes deplored — Former conversation resumed to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light — Truth placed within reach of the humblest — Equality — Happy state of the two Boys again adverted to — Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established

universally by Government — Glorious effects of this foretold — Walk to the Lake — Grand spectacle from the side of a hill — Address of Priest to the Supreme Being — In the course of which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him — The change ascribed to Christianity — Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead — Gratitude to the Almighty — Return over the Lake — Parting with the Solitary — Under what circumstances.

"To every Form of being is assigned,"  
Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,  
"An *active* Principle: -- howe'er removed  
From sense and observation, it subsists  
In all things, in all natures; in the stars  
Of azure heaven, the unending clouds,  
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone  
That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,  
The moving waters, and the invisible air.  
Whate'er exists hath properties that spread  
Beyond itself, communicating good, 11  
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed;  
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,  
No chasm, no solitude; from link to link  
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.  
This is the freedom of the universe;  
Unfolded still the more, more visible,  
The more we know; and yet is revered  
least,

And least respected in the human Mind,  
Its most apparent home. The food of hope  
Is meditated action; robbed of this 21  
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.  
We perish also; for we live by hope  
And by desire; we see by the glad light  
And breathe the sweet air of futurity;  
And so we live, or else we have no life.  
To-morrow — may perchance this very hour  
(For every moment hath its own to-mor-  
row!)

Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are  
almost sick

With present triumph, will be sure to find 30  
A field before them freshened with the dew  
Of other expectations; -- in which course  
Their happy year spins round. The youth  
obeys

A like glad impulse; and so moves the man  
'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and  
fears, --

Or so he ought to move. Ah! why in age  
Do we revert so fondly to the walks  
Of childhood — but that there the Soul dis-  
cerns

The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired  
Of her own native vigour; thence can hear  
Reverberations; and a choral song, 41  
Commingling with the incense that ascends,  
Undaunted, toward the imperishable  
heavens,  
From her own lonely altar?

Do not think  
That good and wise ever will be allowed,  
Though strength decay, to breathe in such  
estate

As shall divide them wholly from the stir  
Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said  
That Man descends into the VALE of years;  
Yet have I thought that we might also  
speak, 50

And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,  
As of a final EMINENCE; though bare  
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point  
On which 't is not impossible to sit

In awful sovereignty; a place of power,  
A throne, that may be likened unto his,  
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks  
Down from a mountain-top, — say one of  
those

High peaks, that bound the vale where  
now we are.

Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye, 60  
Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,  
With all the shapes over their surface  
spread:

But, while the gross and visible frame of  
things

Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,  
Yea almost on the Mind herself, and seems  
All unsubstantialized, — how loud the  
voice

Of waters, with invigorated peal  
From the full river in the vale below,  
Ascending! For on that superior height  
Who sits, is disencumbered from the press  
Of near obstructions, and is privileged 71  
To breathe in solitude, above the host  
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air  
That suits not them. The murmur of the  
leaves

Many and idle, visits not his ear:  
This he is freed from, and from thousand  
notes

(Not less unceasing, not less vain than  
these,)

By which the finer passages of sense  
Are occupied; and the Soul, that would in-  
cline

To listen, is prevented or deterred. 80



And may it not be hoped, that, placed by  
age  
In like removal, tranquil though severe,  
We are not so removed for utter loss;  
But for some favour, suited to our need?  
What more than that the severing should  
confer  
Fresh power to commune with the invisible  
world,  
And hear the mighty stream of tendency  
Uttering, for elevation of our thought,  
A clear sonorous voice, inaudible  
To the vast multitude; whose doom it is 60  
To run the giddy round of vain delight,  
Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes  
Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close  
And termination of his mortal course;  
Them only can such hope inspire whose  
minds

Have not been starved by absolute neglect;  
Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil;  
To whom kind Nature, therefore, may af-  
ford

Proof of the sacred love she bears for all;  
Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may  
ensure. 101

For me, consulting what I feel within  
In times when most existence with herself  
Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,  
That, far as kindly Nature hath free  
scope

And Reason's sway predominates; even so  
far,

Country, society, and time itself,  
That saps the individual's bodily frame,  
And lays the generations low in dust,  
Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, par-  
take 110

Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth  
And cherishing with ever-constant love,  
That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is  
turned

Out of her course, wherever man is made  
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool  
Or implement, a passive thing employed  
As a brute mean, without acknowledgment  
Of common right or interest in the end;  
Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt,  
Say, what can follow for a rational soul 120  
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,  
And strength in evil? Hence an after-call  
For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,  
And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,

And the sole guardian in whose hands we  
dare

Entrust the future. — Not for these sad is-  
sues

Was Man created; but to obey the law  
Of life, and hope, and action. And 't is  
known

That when we stand upon our native soil,  
Unelbowed by such objects as oppress 130

Our active powers, those powers themselves  
become

Strong to subvert our noxious qualities:  
They sweep distemper from the busy day,  
And make the chalice of the big round  
year

Run o'er with gladness; whence the Being  
moves

In beauty through the world; and all who  
see

Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what  
force

Of language shall a feeling heart express  
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom 140  
We look for health from seeds that have  
been sown

In sickness, and for increase in a power  
That works but by extinction? On them-  
selves

They cannot lean, nor turn to their own  
hearts

To know what they must do; their wisdom  
is

To look into the eyes of others, thence  
To be instructed what they must avoid:  
Or rather, let us say, how least observed,  
How with most quiet and most silent  
death,

With the least taint and injury to the air 150  
The oppressor breathes, their human form  
divine,

And their immortal soul, may waste away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you -- you  
have spared

My voice the utterance of a keen regret,  
A wide compassion which with you I share.  
When, heretofore, I placed before your  
sight

A Little-one, subjected to the arts  
Of modern ingenuity, and made  
The senseless member of a vast machine,  
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel; 160  
Think not, that, pitying him, I could forget

The rustic Boy, who walks the fields, un-  
taught;  
The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,  
And miserable hunger. Much, too much,  
Of this unhappy lot, in early youth  
We both have witnessed, lot which I my-  
self  
Shared, though in mild and merciful de-  
gree:  
Yet was the mind to hindrances exposed,  
Through which I struggled, not without  
distress  
And sometimes injury, like a lamb en-  
thralled  
'Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that<sup>170</sup>  
breaks  
Through a strong net, and mounts upon the  
wind,  
Though with her plumes impaired. If  
they, whose souls  
Should open while they range the richer  
fields  
Of merry England, are obstructed less  
By indigence, their ignorance is not less,  
Nor less to be deplored. For who can  
doubt  
That tens of thousands at this day exist  
Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs  
Of those who once were vassals of her soil,  
Following its fortunes like the beasts or  
trees  
Which it sustained. But no one takes de-<sup>181</sup>  
light  
In this oppression; none are proud of it;  
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;  
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice  
Of every country under heaven. My  
thoughts  
Were turned to evils that are new and  
chosen,  
A bondage lurking under shape of good, —  
Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,  
But all too fondly followed and too far; —  
To victims, which the merciful can see  
Nor think that they are victims — turned<sup>191</sup>  
to wrongs,  
By women, who have children of their  
own,  
Beheld without compassion, yea with  
praise!  
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused  
With gladness, thinking that the more it  
spreads  
The healthier, the securer, we become;  
Delusion which a moment may destroy!

Lastly, I mourned for those whom I had  
seen  
Corrupted and cast down, on favoured<sup>oo</sup>  
ground,  
Where circumstance and nature had com-  
bined  
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;  
Who, but for this intrusion, would have  
lived,  
Possessed of health, and strength, and  
peace of mind;  
Thus would have lived, or never have been  
born.

Alas! what differs more than man from  
man!  
And whence that difference? whence but  
from himself?  
For see the universal Race endowed  
With the same upright form! — The sun is  
fixed,  
And the infinite magnificence of heaven<sup>210</sup>  
Fixed, within reach of every human eye;  
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;  
The vernal field infuses fresh delight  
Into all hearts. Throughout the world of  
sense,  
Even as an object is sublime or fair,  
That object is laid open to the view  
Without reserve or veil; and as a power  
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,  
Are each and all enabled to perceive  
That power, that influence, by impartial<sup>220</sup>  
law.  
Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;  
Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and  
tears;  
Imagination, freedom in the will;  
Conscience to guide and check; and death  
to be  
Foretasted, immortality conceived  
By all, — a blissful immortality,  
To them whose holiness on earth shall make  
The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.  
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous,  
might be deemed  
The failure, if the Almighty, to this point<sup>230</sup>  
Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide  
The excellence of moral qualities  
From common understanding; leaving  
truth  
And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;  
Hard to be won, and only by a few;  
Strange, should He deal herein with nice  
respects,

And frustrate all the rest ! Believe it not:  
The primal duties shine aloft — like stars;  
The charities that soothe, and heal, and  
bless,

Are scattered at the feet of Man — like  
flowers. 240

The generous inclination, the just rule,  
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure  
thoughts —

No mystery is here ! Here is no boon  
For high — yet not for low; for proudly  
graced —

Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke  
ascends

To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth  
As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose  
soul

Ponders this true equality, may walk  
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;  
Yet, in that meditation, will he find 250

Motive to sadder grief, as we have found;  
Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,  
And for the injustice grieving, that hath  
made

So wide a difference between man and man.

Then let us rather fix our gladdened  
thoughts

Upon the brighter scene. How blest that  
pair

Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even  
now)

Blest in their several and their common  
lot !

A few short hours of each returning day  
The thriving prisoners of their village  
school: 260

And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant  
homes

Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy:  
To breathe and to be happy, run and shout,  
Idle, — but no delay, no harm, no loss;  
For every genial power of heaven and  
earth,

Through all the seasons of the changeful  
year,

Obsequiously doth take upon herself  
To labour for them; bringing each in turn  
The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge,  
health,

Beauty, or strength ! Such privilege is  
theirs, 270

Granted alike in the outset of their course  
To both; and, if that partnership must  
cease,

I grieve not," to the Pastor here he turned,  
" Much as I glory in that child of yours,  
Repine not for his cottage-comrade, whom  
Belike no higher destiny awaits  
Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled;  
The wish for liberty to live — content  
With what Heaven grants, and die — in  
peace of mind,

Within the bosom of his native vale.  
At least, whatever fate the noon of life  
Reserves for either, sure it is that both  
Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn;  
Whether regarded as a jocund time,  
That in itself may terminate, or lead  
In course of nature to a sober eve.  
Both have been fairly dealt with; looking  
back

They will allow that justice has in them  
Been shown, alike to body and to mind."

He paused, as if revolving in his soul 290  
Some weighty matter; then, with fervent  
voice

And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed —

" O for the coming of that glorious time  
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest  
wealth

And best protection, this imperial Realm,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation, on her part, to *teach*  
Them who are born to serve her and obey;  
Binding herself by statute to secure  
For all the children whom her soil maintains  
The rudiments of letters, and inform 300  
The mind with moral and religious truth,  
Both understood and practised, — so that  
none,

However destitute, be left to droop  
By timely culture unsustained; or run  
Into a wild disorder; or be forced  
To drudge through a weary life without the  
help

Of intellectual implements and tools;  
A savage horde among the civilised,  
A servile band among the lordly free ! 310  
This sacred right, the lisping babe pro-  
claims

To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,  
For the protection of his innocence;  
And the rude boy — who, having overpast  
The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled,  
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,  
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,  
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech

To impious use — by process indirect  
 Declares his due, while he makes known  
 his need. 320

— This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,

This universal plea in vain addressed,  
 To eyes and ears of parents who themselves  
 Did, in the time of their necessity,  
 Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a  
 prayer

That from the humblest floor ascends to  
 heaven,

It mounts to meet the State's parental ear;  
 Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,  
 And be not most unfeelingly devoid  
 Of gratitude to Providence, will grant 330  
 The unquestionable good — which, England,  
 safe

From interference of external force,  
 May grant at leisure; without risk incurred  
 That what in wisdom for herself she doth,  
 Others shall e'er be able to undo.

Look! and behold, from Calpe's sun-  
 burnt cliffs

To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,  
 Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;  
 Laws overturned; and territory split,  
 Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind, 340  
 And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes  
 Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust  
 Of the same breath are shattered and de-  
 stroyed.

Meantime the sovereignty of these fair  
 Isles

Remains entire and indivisible:  
 And, if that ignorance were removed, which  
 breeds

Within the compass of their several shores  
 Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each  
 Might still preserve the beautiful repose  
 Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.

— The discipline of slavery is unknown 351  
 Among us, — hence the more do we require  
 The discipline of virtue; order else  
 Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.  
 Thus, duties rising out of good possest,  
 And prudent caution needful to avert  
 Impending evil, equally require  
 That the whole people should be taught and  
 trained.

So shall licentiousness and black resolve  
 Be rooted out; and virtuous habits take 360  
 Their place; and genuine piety descend,  
 Like an inheritance, from age to age.

With such foundations laid, avault the  
 fear

Of numbers crowded on their native soil,  
 To the prevention of all healthful growth  
 Through mutual injury! Rather in the law  
 Of increase and the mandate from above  
 Rejoice! — and ye have special cause for  
 joy.

— For, as the element of air affords  
 An easy passage to the industrious bees 370  
 Fraught with their burthens; and a way as  
 smooth

For those ordained to take their sounding  
 flight

From the thronged hive, and settle where  
 they list

In fresh abodes — their labour to renew;  
 So the wide waters, open to the power,  
 The will, the instincts, and appointed needs  
 Of Britain, do invite her to cast off  
 Her swarms, and in succession send them  
 forth;

Bound to establish new communities  
 On every shore whose aspect favours hope  
 Or bold adventure; promising to skill 381  
 And perseverance their deserved reward.

Yes," he continued, kindling as he  
 spake,

"Change wide, and deep, and silently per-  
 formed,

This Land shall witness; and as days roll  
 on,

Earth's universal frame shall feel the effect;  
 Even till the smallest habitable rock,  
 Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs  
 Of humanised society; and bloom  
 With civil arts, that shall breathe forth  
 their fragrance, 390

A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.  
 From culture, unexclusively bestowed  
 On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,  
 Expect these mighty issues: from the pains  
 And faithful care of unambitious schools  
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:  
 Thence look for these magnificent results!  
 — Vast the circumference of hope — and  
 ye

Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;  
 Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall  
 Wisdom's voice 400

From out the bosom of these troubled times  
 Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,  
 And shall the venerable halls ye fill  
 Refuse to echo the sublime decree?

Trust not to partial care a general good;  
Transfer not to futurity a work  
Of urgent need. — Your Country must complete

Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,  
Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian plague

Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe,  
makes

The brightness more conspicuous that invests

The happy Island where ye think and act;  
Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,  
Show to the wretched nations for what end

The powers of civil polity were given."

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,  
The Sage broke off. No sooner had he ceased

Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,  
"Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen  
Upon this flowery slope; and see — beyond —

The silvery lake is streaked with placid blue;

As if preparing for the peace of evening.  
How temptingly the landscape shines !  
The air

Breathes invitation; easy is the walk  
To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moored

Under a sheltering tree." — Upon this hint  
We rose together; all were pleased; but most

The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed with joy.

Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills  
She vanished — eager to impart the scheme  
To her loved brother and his shy compeer.  
— Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house

And earnest preparation. — Forth we went,  
And down the vale along the streamlet's edge

Pursued our way, a broken company,  
Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.  
Thus having reached a bridge, that over-arched

The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed  
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw  
A twofold image; on a grassy bank  
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood  
Another and the same ! Most beautiful,  
On the green turf, with his imperial front

Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,

The breathing creature stood; as beautiful,  
Beneath him, showed his shadowy counterpart.

Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,

And each seemed centre of his own fair world:

Antipodes unconscious of each other,  
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,  
Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight !

"Ah ! what a pity were it to disperse,  
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,  
And yet a breath can do it !"

These few words  
The Lady whispered, while we stood and gazed

Gathered together, all in still delight,  
Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said

In like low voice to my particular ear,  
"I love to hear that eloquent old Man  
Pour forth his meditations, and descendant  
On human life from infancy to age.  
How pure his spirit ! in what vivid hues  
His mind gives back the various forms of things,

Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude !  
While he is speaking, I have power to see  
Even as he sees; but when his voice hath ceased,

Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,  
That combinations so serene and bright  
Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,  
Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is,  
Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,  
Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose peace,

The sufferance only of a breath of air !"

More had she said — but sportive shouts  
were heard

Sent from the jocund hearts of those two Boys,

Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,  
Down the green field came tripping after us.

With caution we embarked; and now the pair

For prouder service were address'd; but each,  
Wishful to leave an opening for my choice,  
Dropped the light oar his eager hand had seized.

Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,  
Their place I took — and for a grateful  
office

Pregnant with recollections of the time  
When, on thy bosom, spacious Winder-  
mere!

A Youth, I practised this delightful art;  
Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew  
Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy  
marge

Was cleared, I dipped, with arms accord-  
ant, oars

Free from obstruction; and the boat ad-  
vanced

Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,<sup>49</sup>  
That, disentangled from the shady boughs  
Of some thick wood, her place of covert,  
cleaves

With correspondent wings the abyss of air.  
— "Observe," the Vicar said, "yon rocky  
isle

With birch-trees fringed; my hand shall  
guide the helm,

While thitherward we shape our course; or  
while

We seek that other, on the western shore;  
Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,  
Supporting gracefully a massy dome<sup>50</sup>  
Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate  
A Grecian temple rising from the Deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we can-  
not err  
In this delicious region." -- Cultured slopes,  
Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scattered  
groves,

And mountains bare, or clothed with an-  
cient woods,

Surrounded us; and, as we held our way  
Along the level of the glassy flood,  
They ceased not to surround us; change of  
place

From kindred features diversely combined,  
Producing change of beauty ever new.<sup>51</sup>  
-- Ah! that such beauty, varying in the  
light

Of living nature, cannot be portrayed  
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill;  
But is the property of him alone  
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,  
And in his mind recorded it with love!

Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse  
Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet  
speaks

Of trivial occupations well devised,<sup>520</sup>

And unsought pleasures springing up by  
chance;

As if some friendly Genius had ordained  
That, as the day thus far had been enriched  
By acquisition of sincere delight,  
The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,  
A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore  
Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed —  
and there,

Merrily seated in a ring, partook  
A choice repast — served by our young<sup>530</sup>  
companions

With rival earnestness and kindred glee.  
Launched from our hands the smooth stone  
skimmed the lake;

With shouts we raised the echoes: — stiller  
sounds

The lovely Girl supplied — a simple song,  
Whose low tones reached not to the distant  
rocks

To be repeated thence, but gently sank  
Into our hearts; and charmed the peaceful  
flood.

Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils  
From land and water; lilies of each hue —  
Golden and white, that float upon the  
waves,<sup>540</sup>

And court the wind; and leaves of that shy  
plant,

(Her flowers were shed) the lily of the  
vale,

That loves the ground, and from the sun  
withholds

Her pensive beauty; from the breeze her  
sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did the  
place

And season yield; but, as we re embarked,  
Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore  
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said

In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,  
"The fire, that burned so brightly to our  
wish,<sup>550</sup>

Where is it now? -- Deserted on the  
beach --

Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning  
breeze

Revive its ashes. What care we for this,  
Whose ends are gained? Behold an em-  
blem here

Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys!  
And, in this unpremeditated slight

Of that which is no longer needed, see  
The common course of human gratitude !”

This plaintive note disturbed not the re-  
pose  
Of the still evening. Right across the  
lake 560  
Our pinnace moves; then, coasting creek  
and bay,  
Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,  
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised  
our eyes  
To shaggy steeps on which the careless  
goat  
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls;  
And thus the bark, meandering with the  
shore,  
Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier  
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,  
We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we  
clomb, 570  
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave  
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,  
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast  
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen: —  
far off,  
And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-  
tower,  
In majesty presiding over fields  
And habitations seemingly preserved  
From all intrusion of the restless world  
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied, 580  
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon  
we couched  
Or sate reclined; admiring quietly  
The general aspect of the scene; but each  
Not seldom over anxious to make known  
His own discoveries; or to favourite points  
Directing notice, merely from a wish  
To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.  
That rapturous moment never shall I forget  
When these particular interests were ef-  
faced  
From every mind ! — Already had the sun,  
Sinking with less than ordinary state, 590  
Attained his western bound; but rays of  
light —  
Now suddenly diverging from the orb  
Retired behind the mountain tops or veiled  
By the dense air — shot upwards to the  
crown

Of the blue firmament — aloft, and wide:  
And multitudes of little floating clouds,  
Through their ethereal texture pierced —  
ere we,  
Who saw, of change were conscious — had  
become  
Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised, —  
Imnumerable multitude of forms 600  
Scattered through half the circle of the  
sky;  
And giving back, and shedding each on  
each,  
With prodigal communion, the bright hues  
Which from the unapparent fount of glory  
They had imbibed, and ceased not to re-  
ceive.  
That which the heavens displayed, the  
liquid deep  
Repeated; but with unity sublime !

While from the grassy mountain's open  
side  
We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes in-  
tent 610  
On the refulgent spectacle, diffused  
Through earth, sky, water, and all visible  
space,  
The Priest in holy transport thus ex-  
claimed:  
“ Eternal Spirit ! universal God !  
Power inaccessible to human thought,  
Save by degrees and steps which thou hast  
deigned  
To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,  
To the infirmity of mortal sense  
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type  
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp  
Of those who fill thy courts in highest  
heaven, 620  
The radiant Cherubim; — accept the thanks  
Which we, thy humble Creatures, here con-  
vened,  
Presume to offer; we, who — from the  
breast  
Of the frail earth, permitted to behold  
The faint reflections only of thy face —  
Are yet exalted, and in soul adore !  
Such as they are who in thy presence stand  
Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink  
Imperishable majesty streamed forth 630  
From thy empyreal throne, the elect of  
earth  
Shall be — divested at the appointed hour  
Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal  
stain.

— Accomplish, then, their number; and conclude

Time's weary course ! Or if, by thy decree,  
The consummation that will come by stealth

Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,  
Oh ! let thy Word prevail, to take away  
The sting of human nature. Spread the law,  
As it is written in thy holy book, <sup>640</sup>  
Throughout all lands; let every nation hear  
The high behest, and every heart obey;  
Both for the love of purity, and hope  
Which it affords, to such as do thy will  
And persevere in good, that they shall rise,  
To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.  
— Father of good ! this prayer in bounty grant,

In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.  
Then, not till then, shall persecution cease,  
And cruel wars expire. The way is marked, <sup>650</sup>

The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.  
Alas ! the nations, who of yore received  
These tidings, and in Christian temples meet

The sacred truth to knowledge, linger still;  
Preferring bonds and darkness to a state  
Of holy freedom, by redeeming love  
Proffered to all, while yet on earth detained.

So fare the many; and the thoughtful few,  
Who in the anguish of their souls bewail  
This dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask, <sup>660</sup>

Shall it endure ? Shall enmity and strife,  
Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their seed;

And the kind never perish ? Is the hope  
Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain  
A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,  
And ne'er to fail ? Shall that blest day arrive

When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell  
In crowded cities, without fear shall live  
Studious of mutual benefit; and he,  
Whom Morn awakens, among dews and flowers <sup>670</sup>

Of every clime, to till the lonely field,  
Be happy in himself ? — The law of faith  
Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,

Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve ?  
Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart !  
And with that help the wonder shall be seen

Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy praise  
Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

Once," and with mild demeanour, as he spake,  
On us the venerable Pastor turned <sup>680</sup>  
His beaming eye that had been raised to Heaven,

" Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a sound

Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle  
Unheard, the savage nations bowed the head

To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds;  
Gods which themselves had fashioned, to promote

Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.  
Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,  
To those inventions of corrupted man  
Mysterious rites were solemnised; and there — <sup>690</sup>

Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods —  
Of those terrific Idols some received  
Such dismal service, that the loudest voice  
Of the swollen cataracts (which now are heard

Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome,

Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks

Of human victims, offered up to appease  
Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes  
Had visionary faculties to see

The thing that hath been as the thing that is, <sup>700</sup>

Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere  
Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths voluminous,

Flung from the body of devouring fires,  
To Taranis erected on the heights  
By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed  
Exultingly, in view of open day

And full assemblage of a barbarous host;  
Or to Andates, female Power ! who gave  
(For so they fancied) glorious victory.

— A few rude monuments of mountain-stone <sup>710</sup>

Survive; all else is swept away. — How bright

The appearances of things ! From such, how changed

The existing worship; and with those compared,

The worshippers how innocent and blest !



So wide the difference, a willing mind  
Might almost think, at this affecting hour,  
That paradise, the lost abode of man,  
Was raised again: and to a happy few,  
In its original beauty, here restored.

Whence but from thee, the true and only  
God,<sup>720</sup>  
And from the faith derived through Him  
who bled

Upon the cross, this marvellous advance  
Of good from evil; as if one extreme  
Were left, the other gained. — O ye, who  
come

To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,  
Called to such office by the peaceful sound  
Of sabbath bells; and ye, who sleep in  
earth,

All cares forgotten, round its hallowed  
walls!

For you, in presence of this little band  
Gathered together on the green hill-side,<sup>730</sup>  
Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer  
Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King;  
Whose love, whose counsel, whose com-  
mands, have made

Your very poorest rich in peace of thought  
And in good works; and him, who is en-  
dowed

With scantiest knowledge, master of all  
truth

Which the salvation of his soul requires.  
Conscious of that abundant favour showered  
On you, the children of my humble care,  
And this dear land, our country, while on  
earth<sup>740</sup>

We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,  
Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.  
These barren rocks, your stern inheritance;  
These fertile fields, that recompense your  
pains;

The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-top;  
Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,  
Or hushed; the roaring waters and the  
still —

They see the offering of my lifted hands,  
They hear my lips present their sacrifice,  
They know if I be silent, morn or even:<sup>750</sup>  
For, though in whispers speaking, the full  
heart

Will find a vent; and thought is praise to  
him,

Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,  
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings  
flow!"

This vesper-service closed, without delay,  
From that exalted station to the plain  
Descending, we pursued our homeward  
course,

In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,  
Under a faded sky. No trace remained  
Of those celestial splendours; grey the  
vault —<sup>760</sup>

Pure, cloudless, ether; and the star of eve  
Was wanting; but inferior lights appeared  
Faintly, too faint almost for sight; and  
some

Above the darkened hills stood boldly forth  
In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained  
Her mooring-place; where, to the shelter-  
ing tree,

Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her prow,  
With prompt yet careful hands. This  
done, we paced

The dewy fields; but ere the Vicar's door  
Was reached, the Solitary checked his  
steps;<sup>770</sup>

Then, intermingling thanks, on each be-  
stowed

A farewell salutation; and, the like  
Receiving, took the slender path that leads  
To the one cottage in the lonely dell:

But turned not without welcome promise  
made

That he would share the pleasures and  
pursuits

Of yet another summer's day, not loth  
To wander with us through the fertile vales,  
And o'er the mountain-wastes. "Another  
sun,"

Said he, "shall shine upon us, ere we part;  
Another sun, and peradventure more;<sup>781</sup>  
If time, with free consent, be yours to give,  
And season favours."

To enfeebled Power,  
From this communion with uninjured Minds,  
What renovation had been brought; and  
what

Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,  
Dejected, and habitually disposed

To seek, in degradation of the Kind,  
Excuse and solace for her own defects;  
How far those erring notions were re-  
formed;<sup>790</sup>

And whether aught, of tendency as good  
And pure, from further intercourse ensued;  
This - if delightful hopes, as heretofore,  
Inspire the serious song, and gentle Hearts  
Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the past —  
My future labours may not leave untold.

## LAODAMIA

1814. 1815

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written.

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;  
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades  
forlorn  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:  
Celestial pity I again implore; —  
Restore him to my sight - great Jove, restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts  
her hands;  
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,  
Her countenance brightens - and her eye  
expands;  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature  
grows;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? — O  
joy!  
What doth she look on? — whom doth she  
behold?  
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?  
His vital presence? his corporeal mould?  
It is — if sense deceive her not — 't is He!  
And a God leads him, wingèd Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her with  
his wand  
That calms all fear; "Such grace hath  
crowned thy prayer,  
Laodamia! that at Jove's command  
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:  
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'  
space;  
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"  
Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her  
Lord to clasp;  
Again that consummation she essayed;

But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
As often as that eager grasp was made.  
The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight. 30

"Protesilaüs, lo! thy guide is gone!  
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:  
This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will  
rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed  
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be,  
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;  
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40  
And something also did my worth obtain;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold  
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand  
Should die; but me the threat could not  
withhold:

A generous cause a victim did demand;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;  
A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest,  
best!  
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50  
Which then, when tens of thousands were  
deprest  
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;  
Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here  
thou art —  
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed,  
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath  
decreed  
Thou should'st elude the malice of the  
grave:  
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
As when their breath enriched Thessalian  
air. 60

"No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow  
this;  
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!  
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial  
kiss  
To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"

Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious  
 Parcæ threw  
 Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:  
 Nor should the change be mourned, even if  
 the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
 And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys  
 Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains: <sup>71</sup>  
 Calm pleasures there abide — majestic  
 pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control  
 Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve  
 The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;  
 A fervent, not ungovernable, love.  
 Thy transports moderate; and meekly  
 mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn — "

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by  
 force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the  
 tomb

Alceſtis, a reanimated corse,  
 Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?  
 Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,  
 And Æson stood a youth mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they  
 Yet further may relent: for mightier far  
 Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the  
 sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,  
 Is love, though oft to agony distrest,  
 And though his favourite seat be feeble  
 woman's breast.

"But if thou goest, I follow — " "Peace!"  
 he said, —

She looked upon him and was calmed and  
 cheered;

The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;  
 In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared  
 Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,  
 Brought from a pensive though a happy  
 place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
 In worlds whose course is equable and pure;  
 No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —  
 The past unsighed for, and the future sure;  
 Spake of heroic arts in graver mood <sup>101</sup>  
 Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there  
 In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,  
 An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
 And fields invested with purpleal gleams;  
 Climes which the sun, who sheds the  
 brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath  
 earned

That privilege by virtue. — "Ill," said he, <sup>109</sup>  
 "The end of man's existence I discerned,  
 Who from ignoble games and revelry  
 Could draw, when we had parted, vain  
 delight,

While tears were thy best pastime, day and  
 night;

"And while my youthful peers before my  
 eyes

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
 Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise  
 By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,  
 Chieftains and kings in council were de-  
 tained; <sup>119</sup>

What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I then  
 revolved

The oracle, upon the silent sea;  
 And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
 That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be  
 The foremost prow in pressing to the  
 strand,  
 Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan  
 sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
 When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!  
 On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
 And on the joys we shared in mortal life, —  
 The paths which we had trod — these foun-  
 tains, flowers, <sup>131</sup>

My new-planned cities, and unfinished  
 towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to  
 cry,

'Behold they tremble! — haughty their  
 array,

Yet of their number no one dares to die?'  
 In soul I swept the indignity away:

Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty  
 thought,

In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak

In reason, in self-government too slow; 140  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek

Our blest re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sympathised;

Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend —  
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;  
For this the passion to excess was driven —  
That self might be annulled: her bondage

prove  
The fetters of a dream, opposed to  
love." — 150

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!

Round the dear Shade she would have clung  
— 't is vain:

The hours are past — too brief had they  
been years;

And him no mortal effort can detain:  
Swift, toward the realms that know not  
earthly day,

He through the portal takes his silent way,  
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She  
lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,  
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,  
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,  
Was doomed to wear out her appointed  
time, 161

Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers  
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due;  
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown  
Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,  
As fondly he believes. — Upon the side  
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
From out the tomb of him for whom she  
died; 170

And ever, when such stature they had  
gained

That Ilium's walls were subject to their  
view,

The trees' tall summits withered at the  
sight;

A constant interchange of growth and  
blight!

## DION

(SEE PLUTARCH)

1814. 1820

This poem was first introduced by a stanza that I have since transferred to the Notes, for reasons there given, and I cannot comply with the request expressed by some of my friends that the rejected stanza should be restored. I hope they will be content if it be, hereafter, immediately attached to the poem, instead of its being degraded to a place in the Notes.

## I

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,  
Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace  
Of haughtiness without pretence,  
And to unfold a still magnificence,  
Was princely Dion, in the power  
And beauty of his happier hour.  
And what pure homage *then* did wait  
On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam  
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,  
Fell round him in the grove of Academe, 10  
Softening their inbred dignity austere —

That he, not too elate  
With self-sufficing solitude,  
But with majestic lowliness endued,  
Might in the universal bosom reign,  
And from affectionate observance gain  
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

## II

Five thousand warriors — O the rapturous  
day!

Each crowned with flowers, and armed  
with spear and shield,

Or ruder weapon which their course might  
yield, 20

To Syracuse advance in bright array.  
Who leads them on? — The anxious people  
see

Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,  
He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,  
And in a white, far-beaming, corselet clad!  
Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear  
The gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,  
Salute those strangers as a holy train  
Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)  
That brought their precious liberty again.

Lo! when the gates are entered, on each  
hand, 31  
Down the long street, rich goblets filled  
with wine

In seemly order stand,  
On tables set, as if for rites divine; —  
And, as the great Deliverer marches by,  
He looks on festal ground with fruits  
bestrown;  
And flowers are on his person thrown  
In boundless prodigality;  
Nor doth the general voice abstain from  
prayer,  
Invoking Dion's tutelary care, 40  
As if a very Deity he were!

## III

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and  
mourn  
Ilissus, bending o'er thy classic urn!  
Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit  
dreads  
Your once sweet memory, studious walks  
and shades!

For him who to divinity aspired,  
Not on the breath of popular applause,  
But through dependence on the sacred laws  
Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt  
retired,

Intent to trace the ideal path of right 50  
(More fair than heaven's broad causeway  
paved with stars)

Which Dion learned to measure with sub-  
lime delight; —

But He hath overleaped the eternal bars;  
And, following guides whose craft holds no  
consent

With aught that breathes the ethereal ele-  
ment,

Hath stained the robes of civil power with  
blood,

Unjustly shed, though for the public good.  
Whence doubts that came too late, and  
wishes vain,

Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain;  
And oft his cogitations sink as low 60

As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,  
The heaviest plummet of despair can go —  
But whence that sudden check? that fear-  
ful start!

He hears an uncouth sound —

Anon his lifted eyes

Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,  
A Shape of more than mortal size  
And hideous aspect, stalking round and  
round!

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,  
And fiercely swept the marble floor, —  
Like Auster whirling to and fro, 71

His force on Caspian foam to try;  
Or Boreas when he scours the snow  
That skins the plains of Thessaly,  
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops  
His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

## IV

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,  
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,

Sweeping — vehemently sweeping —  
No pause admitted, no design avowed! 80  
"Avaunt, inexplicable Guest! — avaunt,"  
Exclaimed the Chieftain — "let me rather  
see

The coronal that coiling vipers make;  
The torch that flames with many a lurid  
flake,

And the long train of doleful pageantry  
Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies  
haunt;

Who, while they struggle from the scourge  
to flee,

Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,  
And, in their anguish, bear what other  
minds have borne!"

## V

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call,  
Will not depart when mortal voices bid; 91  
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,  
Once raised, remains aghast, and will not  
fall!

Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement  
Obeys a mystical intent!

Your Minister would brush away  
The spots that to my soul adhere;  
But should she labour night and day,

They will not, cannot disappear;  
Whence angry perturbations, — and that look  
Which no Philosophy can brook! 101

## VI

Ill-fated Chief! there are whose hopes are  
built

Upon the ruins of thy glorious name;  
Who, through the portal of one moment's  
guilt,

Pursue thee with their deadly aim!

O matchless perfidy! portentous lust  
Of monstrous crime! — that horror-striking  
blade,

Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid  
The noble Syracusan low in dust!  
Shuddered the walls — the marble city  
wept — 110

And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh;  
But in calm peace the appointed Victim  
    slept,  
As he had fallen in magnanimity;  
Of spirit too capacious to require  
That Destiny her course should change;  
    too just  
To his own native greatness to desire  
That wretched boon, days lengthened by  
    mistrust.

So were the hopeless troubles, that involved  
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.  
Released from life and cares of princely  
    state,  
He left this moral grafted on his Fate;  
"Him only pleasure leads, and peace at-  
    tends,  
Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,  
Whose means are fair and spotless as his  
    ends."

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

1814

In this tour, my wife and her sister Sara were my companions. The account of the "Brownie's Cell" and the Brownies was given me by a man we met with on the banks of Loch Lomond, a little above Tarbert, and in front of a huge mass of rock, by the side of which, we were told, preachings were often held in the open air. The place is quite a solitude, and the surrounding scenery very striking. How much is it to be regretted that, instead of writing such Poems as the "Holy Fair" and others, in which the religious observances of his country are treated with so much levity and too often with indecency, Burns had not employed his genius in describing religion under the serious and affecting aspects it must so frequently take.

## I

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON  
ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND.  
A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT  
OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM  
WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED  
THE NAME OF

## THE BROWNIE'S CELL

1814. 1820

## I

To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking  
    fen,  
Or depth of labyrinthine glen;  
Or into trackless forest set  
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met,  
World-wearied Men withdrew of yore;  
(Penance their trust, and prayer their  
    store;)  
And in the wilderness were bound  
To such apartments as they found,  
Or with a new ambition raised;  
That God might suitably be praised. 10

II

High lodged the Warrior, like a bird of prey;  
Or where broad waters round him lay:  
But this wild Ruin is no ghost  
Of his devices — buried, lost!

Within this little lonely isle  
There stood a consecrated Pile;  
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,  
For them whose timid Spirits clung  
To mortal succour, though the tomb  
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom! 20

## III

Upon those servants of another world  
When madding Power her bolts had hurled,  
Their habitation shook — it fell,  
And perished, save one narrow cell;  
Whither, at length, a Wretch retired  
Who neither grovelled nor aspired;  
He, struggling in the net of pride,  
The future scorned, the past defied;  
Still tempering, from the unguilty forge  
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge! 30

## IV

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,  
Who stood and flourished face to face  
With their perennial hills; — but Crime,  
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,  
Brought low a Power, which from its home  
Burst, when repose grew wearisome;  
And, taking impulse from the sword,  
And, mocking its own plighted word,  
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,  
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt! 40

## V

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose smile

Shot lightning through this lonely Isle !  
No right had he but what he made  
To this small spot, his leafy shade;  
But the ground lay within that ring  
To which he only dared to cling;  
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,  
The craven few who bowed the head  
Beneath the change; who heard a claim  
How loud ! yet lived in peace with shame. 50

## VI

From year to year this shaggy Mortal went

(So seemed it) down a strange descent:  
Till they, who saw his outward frame,  
Fixed on him an unhallowed name;  
Him, free from all malicious taint,  
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,  
A pen unwearied — to indite,  
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night;  
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span  
The faded glories of his Clan ! 60

## VII

Suns that through blood their western har-  
bour sought,

And stars that in their courses fought;  
Towers rent, winds combating with woods,  
Lands deluged by unbridled floods;  
And beast and bird that from the spell  
Of sleep took import terrible; —  
These types mysterious (if the show  
Of battle and the routed foe  
Had failed) would furnish an array  
Of matter for the dawning day ! 70

## VIII

How disappeared He ? — ask the newt and toad,

Inheritors of his abode;  
The otter crouching undisturbed,  
In her dank cleft; — but be thou curbed,  
O froward Fancy ! 'mid a scene  
Of aspect winning and serene;  
For those offensive creatures shun  
The inquisition of the sun !  
And in this region flowers delight,  
And all is lovely to the sight. 80

## IX

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,  
When she applies her annual test

To dead and living; when her breath  
Quickens, as now, the withered heath; —  
Nor flaunting Summer — when he throws  
His soul into the briar-rose;  
Or calls the lily from her sleep  
Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;  
Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren  
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S Den. 90

## X

Wild Relique ! beauteous as the chosen spot

In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;  
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,  
(High Servant of paternal Love)  
Young Bacchus was conveyed — to lie  
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;  
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage,  
glowed,

Close-crowding round the infant-god;  
All colours, — and the liveliest streak  
A foil to his celestial cheek ! 100

## II

## COMPOSED AT CORA LINN.

## IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER

1814. 1820

I had seen this celebrated Waterfall twice  
before : but the feelings, to which it had given  
birth, were not expressed till they recurred in  
presence of the object on this occasion.

" — How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the name  
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,  
All over his dear Country ; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks,  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty." — See p. 127.

LORD of the vale ! astounding Flood;  
The dullest leaf in this thick wood  
Quakes — conscious of thy power;  
The caves reply with hollow moan;  
And vibrates, to its central stone,  
Yon time-cemented Tower !

And yet how fair the rural scene !  
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been  
Beneficent as strong;  
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep 110  
The little trembling flowers that peep  
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love  
To look on thee — delight to rove

Where they thy voice can hear;  
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,  
Lord of the vale ! to Heroes laid  
In dust, that voice is dear !

Along thy banks, at dead of night  
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight; 20  
Or stands, in warlike vest,  
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,  
A Champion worthy of the stream,  
Yon grey tower's living crest !

But clouds and envious darkness hide  
A Form not doubtfully desiered: —  
Their transient mission o'er,  
O say to what blind region flee  
These Shapes of awful phantasy ?  
To what untrodden shore ? 30

Less than divine command they spurn;  
But this we from the mountains learn,  
And this the valleys show;  
That never will they deign to hold  
Communion where the heart is cold  
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain  
Shall walk the Marathonian plain;  
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,  
That still invests the guardian Pass, 40  
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas  
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,  
Or kneel, before the votive shrine  
By Uri's lake, where Tell  
Leapt, from his storm-vest boat, to land,  
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand  
That day the Tyrant fell.

## III

## EFFUSION

IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE  
BANKS OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD

1814. 1827

I am not aware that this condemnatory effusion was ever seen by the owner of the place. He might be disposed to pay little attention to it; but were it to prove otherwise I should be glad, for the whole exhibition is distressingly puerile.

"The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us when we must expect it. We were first, however, conducted into a small apartment, where the Gardener desired us to look at a picture of Ossian, which, while he was telling the history of the young Artist who executed the work, disappeared, parting in the middle — flying asunder as by the touch of magic — and lo! we are at the entrance of a splendid apartment, which was almost dizzy and alive with waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions; the great cascade, opposite the window, which faced us, being reflected in innumerable mirrors upon the ceiling and against the walls." — *Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Traveller.*

WHAT He — who, 'mid the kindred throng  
Of Heroes that inspired his song,  
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms,  
The stars dim-twinkling through their forms !

What ! Ossian here — a painted Thrall,  
Mute fixture on a stuccoed wall;  
To serve — an unsuspected screen  
For show that must not yet be seen;  
And, when the moment comes, to part  
And vanish by mysterious art; 10  
Head, harp, and body, split asunder,  
For ingress to a world of wonder;  
A gay saloon, with waters dancing  
Upon the sight wherever glancing;  
One loud cascade in front, and lo !  
A thousand like it, white as snow —  
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam  
As active round the hollow dome,  
Illusive cataracts ! of their terrors  
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors, 20  
That catch the pageant from the flood  
Thundering adown a rocky wood.  
What pains to dazzle and confound !  
What strife of colour, shape and sound  
In this quaint medley, that might seem  
Devised out of a sick man's dream !  
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy  
As ever made a maniac dizzy,  
When disenchanted from the mood  
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood ! 30

O Nature — in thy changeeful visions,  
Through all thy most abrupt transitions  
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime —  
Ever averse to pantomime,  
Thou neither do they know nor us  
Thy servants, who can trifle thus;  
Else verily the sober powers  
Of rock that frowns, and stream that roars,  
Exalted by congenial sway  
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay, 40



And Names that moulder not away,  
Had wakened some redeeming thought  
More worthy of this favoured Spot;  
Recalled some feeling — to set free  
The Bard from such indignity!

The Effigies of a valiant Wight  
I once beheld, a Templar Knight;  
Not prostrate, not like those that rest  
On tombs, with palms together prest,  
But sculptured out of living stone,  
And standing upright and alone,  
Both hands with rival energy  
Employed in setting his sword free  
From its dull sheath — stern sentinel  
Intent to guard St. Robert's cell;  
As if with memory of the affray  
Far distant, when, as legends say,  
The Monks of Fountain's thronged to force  
From its dear home the Hermit's corse,  
That in their keeping it might lie,  
To crown their abbey's sanctity.  
So had they rushed into the grot  
Of sense despised, a world forgot,  
And torn him from his loved retreat,  
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat  
Still hint that quiet best is found,  
Even by the *Living*, under ground;  
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim  
Defeating, put the monks to shame,  
There where you see his Image stand  
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand  
Which lingering Nid is proud to show  
Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,  
Our sires set forth their grateful praise:  
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!  
But, nursed in mountain solitude,  
Might some aspiring artist dare  
To seize what'er, through misty air,  
A ghost, by glimpses, may present  
Of imitable lineament,  
And give the phantom an array  
That less should scorn the abandoned clay;  
Then let him hew with patient stroke  
An Ossian out of mural rock,  
And leave the figurative Man —  
Upon thy margin, roaring Bran! —  
Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,  
An everlasting watch to keep;  
With local sanctities in trust,  
More precious than a hermit's dust;  
And virtues through the mass infused,  
Which old idolatry abused.

What though the Granite would deny  
All fervour to the sightless eye;

And touch from rising suns in vain  
Solicit a Memnonian strain;  
Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,  
The wind might force the deep-grooved  
harp

To utter melancholy moans  
Not unconnected with the tones  
Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;  
While grove and river notes would lend,  
Less deeply sad, with these to blend!

Vain pleasures of luxurious life,  
For ever with yourselves at strife;  
Through town and country both deranged  
By affectations interchanged,  
And all the perishable gauds  
That heaven-deserted man applauds;  
When will your hapless patrons learn  
To watch and ponder — to discern  
The freshness, the everlasting youth,  
Of admiration sprung from truth;  
From beauty infinitely growing  
Upon a mind with love o'erflowing —  
To sound the depths of every Art  
That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the intrusive Pile, ill-graced  
With baubles of theatric taste,  
O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers  
On motley banks of alien flowers  
In still confusion set or sown,  
Till Nature cannot find her own,  
Or keep a remnant of the sod  
Which Caledonian Heroes trod)  
I mused; and, thirsting for redress,  
Recoiled into the wilderness.

## IV

## YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER 1814

1814. 1815

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us and also Dr. Anderson, the Editor of the British Poets, who was on a visit at the Manse. Dr. A. walked with us till we came in view of the Vale of Yarrow, and, being advanced in life, he then turned back. The old Man was passionately fond of poetry, though with not much of a discriminating judgment, as the Volumes he edited sufficiently show. But I was much pleased to meet with him, and to acknowledge my obligation to his collection,

which had been my brother John's companion in more than one voyage to India, and which he gave me before his departure from Grasmere, never to return. Through these Volumes I became first familiar with Chaucer, and so little money had I then to spare for books, that, in all probability, but for this same work, I should have known little of Drayton, Daniel, and other distinguished poets of the Elizabethan age, and their immediate successors, till a much later period of my life. I am glad to record this, not from any importance of its own, but as a tribute of gratitude to this simple-hearted old man, whom I never again had the pleasure of meeting. I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether. I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion.

AND is this — Yarrow? — *Thus* the Stream  
Of which my fancy cherished,  
So faithfully, a waking dream?  
An image that hath perished!  
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,  
To utter notes of gladness,  
And chase this silence from the air,  
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why? — a silvery current flows  
With uncontrolled meanderings;  
Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.  
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's  
Lake  
Is visibly delighted;  
For not a feature of those hills  
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,  
Save where that pearly whiteness  
Is round the rising sun diffused,  
A tender hazy brightness;  
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes  
All profitless dejection;  
Though not unwilling here to admit  
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower  
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?  
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound  
On which the herd is feeding:  
And haply from this crystal pool,  
Now peaceful as the morning,

The Water-wraith ascended thrice —  
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings  
The haunts of happy Lovers,  
The path that leads them to the grove,  
The leafy grove that covers:  
And Pity sanctifies the Verse  
That paints, by strength of sorrow,  
The unconquerable strength of love;  
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair  
To fond imagination,  
Dost rival in the light of day  
Her delicate creation:  
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
A softness still and holy;  
The grace of forest charms decayed,  
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds  
Rich groves of lofty stature,  
With Yarrow winding through the pomp  
Of cultivated nature;  
And, rising from those lofty groves,  
Behold a Ruin hoary!  
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,  
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,  
For sportive youth to stray in;  
For manhood to enjoy his strength;  
And age to wear away in!  
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,  
A covert for protection  
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there —  
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,  
The wild-wood fruits to gather,  
And on my True-love's forehead plant  
A crest of blooming heather!  
And what if I enwreath my own!  
'T were no offence to reason;  
The sober Hills thus deck their brows  
To meet the wintry season.

I see — but not by sight alone,  
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;  
A ray of fancy still survives —  
Her sunshine plays upon thee!  
Thy ever-youthful waters keep  
A course of lively pleasure;  
And glad some notes my lips can breathe,  
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the Heights,  
They melt, and soon must vanish;  
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine —  
Sad thought which I would banish,

But that I know, where'er I go,  
Thy genuine image, Yarrow !  
Will dwell with me — to heighten joy,  
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

"FROM THE DARK CHAMBERS  
OF DEJECTION FREED"

1814. 1815

Composed in Edinburgh, during my Scotch tour with Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister Miss Hutchinson, in the year 1814. Poor Gillies never rose above that course of extravagance in which he was at that time living, and which soon reduced him to poverty and all its degrading shifts, mendicancy being far from the worst. I grieve whenever I think of him, for he was far from being without genius, and had a generous heart, not always to be found in men given up to profusion. He was nephew of Lord Gillies the Scotch judge, and also of the historian of Greece. He was cousin to Miss Margaret Gillies, who painted so many portraits with success in our house.

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,  
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,  
Rise, GILLIES, rise; the gales of youth shall  
bear

Thy genius forward like a winged steed.  
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed  
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of  
air,

Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,  
If aught be in them of immortal seed,  
And reason govern that audacious flight  
Which heavenward they direct. — Then  
droop not thou,

Erroneously renewing a sad vow  
In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded grove:  
A cheerful life is what the Muses love,  
A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY  
OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCURSION,"  
UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH  
OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL

1814. 1815

To public notice, with reluctance strong,  
Did I deliver this unfinished Song;

Yet for one happy issue; — and I look  
With self-congratulation on the Book  
Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and  
read; —

Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;  
He conned the new-born Lay with grateful  
heart —

Foreboding not how soon he must depart;  
Unweeting that to him the joy was given  
Which good men take with them from  
earth to heaven.

TO B. R. HAYDON

1815. 1816

HIGH is our calling, Friend! — Creative  
Art

(Whether the instrument of words she use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
Heroically fashioned — to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to  
desert.

And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she  
may,

Through long-lived pressure of obscure dis-  
tress,

Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness —  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE

1815. 1820

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF  
MONMOUTH AND MILTON'S HISTORY  
OF ENGLAND)

This was written at Rydal Mount, as a token of affectionate respect for the memory of Milton. "I have determined," says he, in his preface to his *History of England*, "to bestow the telling over even of these reputed tales,

be it for nothing else but in favour of our English Poets and Rhetoricians, who by their wit will know how to use them judiciously."

WHERE be the temples which, in Britain's Isle,

For his paternal Gods, the Trojan raised ?  
Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile  
Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed !  
Ere Julius landed on her white-cliffed shore,

They sank, delivered o'er  
To fatal dissolution; and, I ween,  
No vestige then was left that such had ever  
been.

Nathless, a British record (long concealed  
In old Armorica, whose secret springs  
No Gothic conqueror ever drank) revealed  
The marvellous current of forgotten things;  
How Brutus came, by oracles impelled,

And Albion's giants quelled,  
A brood whom no civility could melt,  
"Who never tasted grace, and goodness  
ne'er had felt."

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued,  
And rooted out the intolerable kind;  
And this too-long-polluted land imbued  
With goodly arts and usages refined;  
Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike  
towers,

And pleasure's sumptuous bowers;  
Whence all the fixed delights of house and  
home,  
Friendships that will not break, and love  
that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain ! region all too fair  
For self-delighting fancy to endure  
That silence only should inhabit there,  
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure !  
But, intermingled with the generous seed,  
Grew many a poisonous weed;  
Thus fares it still with all that takes its  
birth  
From human care, or grows upon the  
breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon ! that war of ven-  
geance waged  
By Guendolen against her faithless lord;  
Till she, in jealous fury unassuaged  
Had slain his paramour with ruthless  
sword:

Then, into Severn hideously defiled,  
She flung her blameless child,

Sabrina, — vowing that the stream should  
bear

That name through every age, her hatred  
to declare. 40

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear  
By his ungrateful daughters turned adrift.  
Ye lightnings, hear his voice ! — they can-  
not hear,

Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.  
But One there is, a Child of nature meek,  
Who comes her Sire to seek;  
And he, recovering sense, upon her breast  
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy  
themes,

And those that Milton loved in youthful  
years; 50

The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes;  
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers;  
Of Arthur, — who, to upper light restored,  
With that terrific sword

Which yet he brandishes for future war,  
Shall lift his country's fame above the  
polar star !

What wonder, then, if in such ample field  
Of old tradition, one particular flower  
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,  
And bloom unnoticed even to this late  
hour ? 60

Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,  
While I this flower transplant  
Into a garden stored with Poesy;  
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply  
some weeds be,  
That, wanting not wild grace, are from all  
mischief free !

A KING more worthy of respect and love  
Than wise Gorbionian ruled not in his day;  
And grateful Britain prospered far above  
All neighbouring countries through his  
righteous sway;

He poured rewards and honours on the  
good; 70

The oppressor he withstood:  
And while he served the Gods with rever-  
ence due

Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns  
and cities grew.

He died, whom Artegael succeeds — his son;  
But how unworthy of that sire was he !

A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun,  
Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.  
From crime to crime he mounted, till at  
length

The nobles leagued their strength  
With a vexed people, and the tyrant  
chased; <sup>so</sup>  
And, on the vacant throne, his worthier  
Brother placed.

From realm to realm the humbled Exile  
went,  
Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain;  
In many a court, and many a warrior's tent,  
He urged his persevering suit in vain.  
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition  
failed,

Dire poverty assailed;  
And, tired with slights his pride no more  
could brook,  
He towards his native country cast a long-  
ing look.

Fair blew the wished-for wind — the voy-  
age sped; <sup>90</sup>  
He landed; and, by many dangers scared,  
"Poorly provided, poorly followed,"  
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.  
How changed from him who, born to high-  
est place,

Had swayed the royal mace,  
Flattered and feared, despised yet deified,  
In Troynovant, his seat by silver Thames's  
side !

From that wild region where the crownless  
King

Lay in concealment with his scanty train,  
Supporting life by water from the spring,  
And such chance food as outlaws can ob-  
tain, <sup>100</sup>

Unto the few whom he esteems his friends  
A messenger he sends;  
And from their secret loyalty requires  
Shelter and daily bread, — the sum of his  
desires.

While he the issue waits, at early morn  
Wandering by stealth abroad, he chanced  
to hear

A startling outcry made by hound and  
horn,

From which the tusky wild boar flies in fear;  
And, scouring toward him o'er the grassy  
plain, <sup>110</sup>

Behold the hunter train !  
He bids his little company advance  
With seeming unconcern and steady coun-  
tenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase,  
Hath checked his foaming courser: — can  
it be !

Methinks that I should recognise that face,  
Though much disguised by long adversity !  
He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed,  
Confounded and amazed —

"It is the king, my brother !" and, by  
sound <sup>120</sup>

Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps upon  
the ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embrace  
he gave,

Feebly returned by daunted Artegal;  
Whose natural affection doubts enslave,  
And apprehensions dark and criminal.  
Loth to restrain the moving interview,

The attendant lords withdrew;  
And, while they stood upon the plain apart,  
Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his strug-  
gling heart.

"By heavenly Powers conducted, we have  
met; <sup>130</sup>

-- O Brother ! to my knowledge lost so  
long,

But neither lost to love, nor to regret,  
Nor to my wishes lost; -- forgive the wrong,  
(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have  
borne,

Thy royal mantle worn:  
I was thy natural guardian; and 't is just  
That now I should restore what hath been  
held in trust."

A while the astonished Artegal stood mute,  
Then thus exclaimed: "To me, of titles  
shorn,

And stripped of power ! me, feeble, de-  
stitute, <sup>140</sup>

To me a kingdom ! spare the bitter scorn:  
If justice ruled the breast of foreign kings,

Then, on the wide-spread wings  
Of war, had I returned to claim my right;  
This will I here avow, not dreading thy de-  
spite "

"I do not blame thee," Elidure replied;  
"But, if my looks did with my words agree,

I should at once be trusted, not defied,  
 And thou from all disquietude be free.  
 May the unsullied Goddess of the chase, <sup>150</sup>  
 Who to this blessed place  
 At this blest moment led me, if I speak  
 With insincere intent, on me her vengeance  
 wreak !

"Were this same spear, which in my hand  
 I grasp,  
 The British sceptre, here would I to thee  
 The symbol yield; and would undo this clasp,  
 If it confined the robe of sovereignty.  
 Odious to me the pomp of regal court,  
 And joyless sylvan sport,  
 While thou art roving, wretched and for-  
 lorn, <sup>160</sup>  
 Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the  
 forest thorn !"

Then Artegál thus spake: "I only sought,  
 Within this realm a place of safe retreat;  
 Beware of rousing an ambitious thought;  
 Beware of kindling hopes, for me unmeet !  
 Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind  
 Art pitifully blind:  
 Full soon this generous purpose thou may'st  
 rue,  
 When that which has been done no wishes  
 can undo.

"Who, when a crown is fixed upon his  
 head, <sup>170</sup>  
 Would balance claim with claim, and right  
 with right ?  
 But thou — I know not how inspired, how  
 led --  
 Wouldst change the course of things in all  
 men's sight !  
 And this for one who cannot imitate  
 Thy virtue, who may hate:  
 For, if, by such strange sacrifice restored,  
 He reign, thou still must be his king, and  
 sovereign lord;

"Lifted in magnanimity above  
 Aught that my feeble nature could per-  
 form,  
 Or even conceive; surpassing me in love <sup>180</sup>  
 Far as in power the eagle doth the worm.  
 I, Brother ! only should be king in name,  
 And govern to my shame;  
 A shadow in a hated land, while all  
 Of glad or willing service to thy share  
 would fall."

"Believe it not," said Elidure ; "respect  
 Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most  
 Attends on goodness with dominion decked,  
 Which stands the universal empire's boast;  
 This can thy own experience testify: <sup>190</sup>  
 Nor shall thy foes deny  
 That, in the gracious opening of thy reign,  
 Our father's spirit seemed in thee to  
 breathe again.

"And what if o'er thy bright unbosoming  
 Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune  
 past !  
 Have we not seen the glories of the spring  
 By veil of noontide darkness overcast ?  
 The frith that glittered like a warrior's  
 shield,  
 The sky, the gay green field,  
 Are vanished; gladness ceases in the  
 groves, <sup>200</sup>  
 And trepidation strikes the blackened  
 mountain-caves.

"But is that gloom dissolved ? how passing  
 clear  
 Seems the wide world, far brighter than  
 before !  
 Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,  
 Gladdening the people's heart from shore  
 to shore;  
 For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone;  
 Re-seated on thy throne,  
 Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune,  
 pain,  
 And sorrow, have confirmed thy native  
 right to reign.

"But, not to overlook what thou may'st  
 know, <sup>210</sup>  
 Thy enemies are neither weak nor few;  
 And circumspect must be our course, and  
 slow,  
 Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.  
 Dismiss thy followers; — let them calmly  
 wait  
 Such change in thy estate  
 As I already have in thought devised;  
 And which, with caution due, may soon be  
 realised."

The Story tells what courses were pursued,  
 Until king Elidure, with full consent  
 Of all his peers, before the multitude, <sup>220</sup>  
 Rose, — and, to consummate this just in-  
 tent,

Did place upon his brother's head the crown,  
 Relinquished by his own;  
 Then to his people cried, "Receive your lord,  
 Gorbonian's first-born son, your rightful king restored!"

The people answered with a loud acclaim:  
 Yet more;— heart-smitten by the heroic deed,

The reinstated Artegal became  
 Earth's noblest penitent; from bondage freed

Of vice— thenceforth unable to subvert <sup>230</sup>  
 Or shake his high desert.

Long did he reign; and, when he died, the tear

Of universal grief bedewed his honoured bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brother saved;  
 With whom a crown (temptation that hath set

Discord in hearts of men till they have braved

Their nearest kin with deadly purpose met)  
 'Gainst duty weighed, and faithful love, did seem

A thing of no esteem;  
 And, from this triumph of affection pure,  
 He bore the lasting name of "pious Eildure."  
241

## SEPTEMBER 1815

1815. 1816

"For me who under kindlier laws." This conclusion has more than once, to my great regret, excited painfully sad feelings in the hearts of young persons fond of poetry and poetic composition, by contrast of their feeble and declining health with that state of robust constitution which prompted me to rejoice in a season of frost and snow as more favourable to the Muses than summer itself.

WHILE not a leaf seems faded; while the fields,  
 With ripening harvest prodigally fair,  
 In brightest sunshine bask; this nipping air,

Sent from some distant clime where Winter wields

His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields

Of bitter change, and bids the flowers beware;

And whispers to the silent birds, "Prepare Against the threatening foe your trustiest shields."

For me, who under kindlier laws belong  
 To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling dry  
 Through leaves yet green, and yon crystal-line sky,

Announce a season potent to renew,  
 'Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys of song,

And nobler cares than listless summer knew.

## NOVEMBER 1

1815. 1816

Suggested on the banks of the Brathay by the sight of Langdale Pikes. It is delightful to remember these moments of far-distant days, which probably would have been forgotten if the impression had not been transferred to verse. The same observation applies to the next.

How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright

The effluence from yon distant mountain's head,

Which, strewn with snow smooth as the sky can shed,

Shines like another sun— on mortal sight  
 Uprisen, as if to check approaching Night,  
 And all her twinkling stars. Who now would tread,

If so he might, yon mountain's glittering head—

Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight  
 Of sad mortality's earth-sullyng wing,  
 Unswept, unstained? Nor shall the aerial Powers

Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,  
 White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,  
 Through all vicissitudes, till genial Spring  
 Has filled the laughing vales with welcome flowers.

"THE FAIREST, BRIGHTEST,  
 HUES OF ETHER FADE"

1810-15. 1815

Suggested at Hacket, which is on the craggy ridge that rises between the two Langdales and looks towards Windermere. The Cottage

of Hacket was often visited by us, and at the time when this Sonnet was written, and long after, was occupied by the husband and wife described in the "Excursion," where it is mentioned that she was in the habit of walking in the front of the dwelling with a light to guide her husband home at night. The same cottage is alluded to in the "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont" as that from which the female peasant hailed us on our morning journey. The musician mentioned in the Sonnet was the Rev. Samuel Tillbrook of Peter-house, Cambridge, who remodelled the Ivy Cottage at Rydal after he had purchased it.

THE fairest, brightest, hues of ether fade;  
The sweetest notes must terminate and die;  
O Friend! thy flute has breathed a harmony  
Softly resounded through this rocky glade;  
Such strains of rapture as the Genius played  
In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high;  
He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,  
Never before to human sight betrayed.  
Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening spread!  
The visionary Arches are not there,  
Nor the green Islands, nor the shining Seas:  
Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,  
Whence I have risen, uplifted, on the breeze  
Of harmony, above all earthly care.

"WEAK IS THE WILL OF MAN,  
HIS JUDGMENT BLIND"

1810-15. 1815

"WEAK is the will of Man, his judgment blind;  
Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays;  
Heavy is woe; -- and joy, for human-kind,  
A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze!"  
Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days  
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,  
And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.  
Imagination is that sacred power,  
Imagination lofty and refined;

'T is hers to pluck the amaranthine flower  
Of Faith, and round the Sufferer's temples bind  
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,  
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

"HAIL, TWILIGHT, SOVEREIGN  
OF ONE PEACEFUL HOUR"

1810-15. 1815

HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour!  
Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night;  
But studious only to remove from sight  
Day's mutable distinctions. — Ancient Power!  
Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower,  
To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest  
Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest  
On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower  
Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him  
was seen  
The self-same Vision which we now behold,  
At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power!  
brought forth  
These mighty barriers, and the gulf between;  
The flood, the stars, — a spectacle as old  
As the beginning of the heavens and earth!

"THE SHEPHERD, LOOKING  
EASTWARD, SOFTLY SAID"

1810-15. 1815

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,  
"Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art bright!"  
Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether spread  
And penetrated all with tender light,  
She cast away, and showed her fulgent head  
Uncovered; dazzling the Beholder's sight  
As if to vindicate her beauty's right  
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.  
Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown aside,  
Went floating from her, darkening as it went;



And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,  
Approached this glory of the firmament;  
Who meekly yields, and is obscured — content

With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

"EVEN AS A DRAGON'S EYE THAT  
FEELS THE STRESS"

1810-15. 1815

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the  
stress

Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp  
Suddenly glaring through sepulchral damp,  
So burns you Taper mid a black recess  
Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless:  
The lake below reflects it not; the sky,  
Muffled in clouds, affords no company  
To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.  
Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing  
Which sends so far its melancholy light,  
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring  
A gay society with faces bright,  
Conversing, reading, laughing; — or they  
sing,

While hearts and voices in the song unite.

"MARK THE CONCENTRED  
HAZELS THAT ENCLOSE."

1810-15. 1815

Suggested in the wild hazel wood at the foot of Helm-crag, where the stone still lies, with others of like form and character, though much of the wood that veiled it from the glare of day has been felled. This beautiful ground was lately purchased by our friend Mrs Fletcher, the ancient owners, most respected persons, being obliged to part with it in consequence of the imprudence of a son. It is gratifying to mention that, instead of murmuring and repining at this change of fortune, they offered their services to Mrs. Fletcher, the husband as an outdoor labourer, and the wife as a domestic servant. I have witnessed the pride and pleasure with which the man worked at improvements of the ground round the house. Indeed he expressed those feelings to me himself, and the countenance and manner of his wife always denoted feelings of the same character. I believe a similar disposition to contentment under change of fortune is common among the class to which these good people belong. Yet, in proof that to part with their patrimony is most

painful to them, I may refer to those stanzas entitled "Repentance," no inconsiderable part of which was taken verbatim from the language of the speaker herself.

MARK the concentrated hazels that enclose  
You old gray Stone, protected from the  
ray

Of noontide suns: — and even the beams  
that play

And glance, while wantonly the rough  
wind blows,

Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows  
Upon that roof, amid embowering gloom,  
The very image framing of a Tomb,  
In which some ancient Chieftain finds re-  
pose

Among the lonely mountains. — Live, ye  
trees!

And thou, grey Stone, the pensive likeness  
keep

Of a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep:  
For more than Fancy to the influence bends  
When solitary Nature condescends  
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

TO THE POET, JOHN DYER

1810-15. 1815

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful genius  
made

That work a living landscape fair and  
bright;

Nor hallowed less with musical delight  
Than those soft scenes through which thy  
childhood strayed,

Those southern tracts of Cambria, "deep  
embayed,

With green hills fenced, with ocean's mur-  
mur lulled;"

Though hasty Fame hath many a chaplet  
culled

For worthless brows, while in the pensive  
shade

Of cold neglect she leaves thy head un-  
graced,

Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek  
and still,

A grateful few, shall love thy modest Lay,  
Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall  
stray

O'er naked Snowdon's wide ærial waste;  
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar  
Hill!

"BROOK ! WHOSE SOCIETY THE  
POET SEEKS "

1810-15. 1815

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks,  
Intent his wasted spirits to renew;  
And whom the curious Painter doth pursue  
Through rocky passes, among flowery  
creeks,  
And tracks thee dancing down thy water-  
breaks;  
If wish were mine some type of thee to  
view,  
Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not do  
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human  
cheeks,  
Channels for tears; no Naiad should'st thou  
be, —  
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints nor  
hairs:  
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in  
thee  
With purer robes than those of flesh and  
blood,  
And hath bestowed on thee a safer good;  
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

"SURPRISED BY JOY -- IMPA-  
TIENT AS THE WIND"

1810-15. 1815

This was in fact suggested by my daughter  
Catharine long after her death.

SURPRISED by joy — impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport — Oh ! with  
whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my  
mind —  
But how could I forget thee ? Through  
what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss ? -- That thought's  
return  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no  
more;  
That neither present time, nor years unborn  
Could to my sight that heavenly face re-  
store.

ODE

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED  
FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING.  
JANUARY 18, 1816

1816. 1816

The first stanza of this Ode was composed  
almost extempore, in front of Rydal Mount, be-  
fore church-time, and on such a morning and  
precisely with such objects before my eyes as  
are here described. The view taken of Napo-  
leon's character and proceedings is little in ac-  
cordance with that taken by some historians  
and critical philosophers. I am glad and proud  
of the difference, and trust that this series of  
poems, infinitely below the subject as they are,  
will survive to counteract, in unsophisticated  
minds, the pernicious and degrading tendency  
of those views and doctrines that lead to the  
idolatry of power, as power, and, in that false  
splendour to lose sight of its real nature and  
constitution as it often acts for the gratification  
of its possessor without reference to a beneficial  
end — an infirmity that has characterised men  
of all ages, classes, and employments, since  
Nimrod became a mighty hunter before the  
Lord.

1

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night !  
Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude  
On hearts howe'er insensible or rude;  
Whether thy punctual visitations smite  
The haughty towers where monarchs dwell;  
Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright  
Cheer'st the low threshold of the peasant's  
cell !

Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky  
In naked splendour, clear from mist or  
haze,

Or cloud approaching to divert the rays, 10  
Which even in deepest winter testify

Thy power and majesty,  
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.  
— Well does thine aspect usher in this Day;

As aptly suits therewith that modest pace  
Submitted to the chains  
That bind thee to the path which God or-  
dains

That thou shalt trace,  
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass  
away !

Nor less, the stillness of these frosty plains,  
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace 21  
Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,  
(Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity

Report of storms gone by  
 To us who tread below)  
 Do with the service of this Day accord.  
 — Divinest Object which the uplifted eye  
 Of mortal man is suffered to behold;  
 Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights  
     has poured  
 Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble  
     Vale;  
 Thou who dost warm Earth's universal  
     mould,  
 And for thy bounty wert not unadored  
     By pious men of old;  
 Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee  
     hail!  
 Bright be thy course to-day, let not this  
     promise fail!

## II

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,  
 All nature seems to hear me while I speak,  
 By feelings urged that do not vainly seek  
 Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes  
 That stream in blithe succession from the  
     throats

Of birds, in leafy bower,  
 Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.  
 — There is a radiant though a short-lived  
     flame,  
 That burns for Poets in the dawning east;  
 And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,  
 When the captivity of sleep had ceased;  
 But He who fixed immovably the frame  
 Of the round world, and built, by laws as  
     strong,

A solid refuge for distress —  
 The towers of righteousness;  
 He knows that from a holier altar came  
 The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice;  
 Knows that the source is nobler whence  
     doth rise

The current of this matin song;  
 That deeper far it lies  
 Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

## III

Have we not conquered? — by the venge-  
     ful sword?  
 Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity;  
 That curbed the baser passions, and left free  
 A loyal hand to follow their liege Lord  
 Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Com-  
     peers,  
 Along a track of most unnatural years;  
 In execution of heroic deeds

Whose memory, spotless as the crystal  
     beads

Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,  
 Shall live enrolled above the starry spheres.  
 He, who in concert with an earthly string  
     Of Britain's acts would sing,  
 He with enraptured voice will tell  
 Of One whose spirit no reverse could  
     quell;

Of One that 'mid the failing never failed —  
 Who paints how Britain struggled and pre-  
     vailed

Shall represent her labouring with an eye  
 Of circumspect humanity;  
 Shall show her clothed with strength and  
     skill,

All martial duties to fulfil;  
 Firm as a rock in stationary fight;  
 In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;  
 Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at midnight  
 To rouse the wicked from their giddy  
     dream —

Woe, woe to all that face her in the field!  
 Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

## IV

And thus is *missed* the sole true glory  
 That can belong to human story!  
 At which they only shall arrive  
 Who through the abyss of weakness dive.  
 The very humblest are too proud of heart;  
 And one brief day is rightly set apart  
 For Him who lifteth up and layeth low;  
 For that Almighty God to whom we owe,  
 Say not that we have vanquished — but that  
     we survive.

## V

How dreadful the dominion of the im-  
     pure!

Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim  
 That less than power unbounded could not  
     tame

That soul of Evil — which, from hell let  
     loose,

Had filled the astonished world with such  
     abuse

As boundless patience only could endure?  
 — Wide-wasted regions — cities wrapt in  
     flame —

Who sees, may lift a streaming eye  
 To Heaven; — who never saw, may heave a  
     sigh;

But the foundation of our nature shakes,  
 And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,

When desolated countries, towns on fire,  
 Are but the avowed attire  
 Of warfare waged with desperate mind  
 Against the life of virtue in mankind;  
 Assaulting without ruth  
 The citadels of truth;  
 While the fair gardens of civility,  
 By ignorance defaced, 110  
 By violence laid waste,  
 Perish without reprieve for flower or  
 tree!

## VI

A crouching purpose — a distracted will —  
 Opposed to hopes that batten upon scorn,  
 And to desires whose ever-waxing horn  
 Not all the light of earthly power could  
 fill;  
 Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient  
 skill,  
 And to celerities of lawless force;  
 Which, spurning God, had flung away re-  
 morse —  
 What could they gain but shadows of re-  
 dress? 120  
 — So bad proceeded propagating worse;  
 And discipline was passion's dire excess.  
 Widens the fatal web, its lines extend,  
 And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.  
 When will your trials teach you to be  
 wise?  
 — O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies!

## VII

No more — the guilt is banished,  
 And, with the guilt, the shame is fled;  
 And, with the guilt and shame, the Woe  
 hath vanished,  
 Shaking the dust and ashes from her  
 head! 130  
 — No more — these lingerings of distress  
 Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.  
 What robe can Gratitude employ  
 So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?  
 What steps so suitable as those that move  
 In prompt obedience to spontaneous mea-  
 sures  
 Of glory, and felicity, and love,  
 Surrendering the whole heart to sacred  
 pleasures?

## VIII

O Britain! dearer far than life is dear,  
 If one there be 140  
 Of all thy progeny

Who can forget thy prowess, never more  
 Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear  
 Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents  
 roar.

As springs the lion from his den,  
 As from a forest-brake  
 Upstarts a glistering snake,  
 The bold Arch-despot re-appeared; — again  
 Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,  
 With all her armèd Powers, 150  
 On that offensive soil, like waves upon  
 a thousand shores.

The trumpet blew a universal blast!  
 But Thou art foremost in the field: — there  
 stand:

Receive the triumph destined to thy hand!  
 All States have glorified themselves; — their  
 claims

Are weighed by Providence, in balance  
 even;

And now, in preference to the mightiest  
 names,

To Thee the exterminating sword is given.  
 Dread mark of approbation, justly gained!  
 Exalted office, worthily sustained! 160

## IX

Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts  
 The memory of thy favour,  
 That else insensibly departs,  
 And loses its sweet savour!  
 Lodge it within us! — as the power of  
 light

Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,  
 Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,  
 So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!  
 What offering, what transcendent monu-  
 ment

Shall our sincerity to Thee present? 170  
 — Not work of hands; but trophies that  
 may reach

To highest Heaven — the labour of the  
 Soul;

That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,  
 Upon the internal conquests made by each,  
 Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.  
 Yet will not heaven disown nor earth gain-  
 say

The outward service of this day;  
 Whether the worshippers entreat  
 Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat;  
 Or thanks and praises to His throne ascend  
 That He has brought our warfare to an  
 end, 181

And that we need no second victory! —

Ha ! what a ghastly sight for man to  
see;

And to the heavenly saints in peace who  
dwell,

For a brief moment, terrible;

But, to thy sovereign penetration, fair,  
Before whom all things are, that were,  
All judgments that have been, or e'er shall  
be;

Links in the chain of thy tranquillity !  
Along the bosom of 'this favoured Na-  
tion,

Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undulation !  
Let all who do this land inherit

Be conscious of thy moving spirit !

Oh, 't is a goodly Ordinance, — the sight,  
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one  
of pure delight;

Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour ar-  
rive,

When a whole people shall kneel down in  
prayer,

And, at one moment, in one rapture, strive  
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude

For thy protecting care,

Their solemn joy — praising the Eternal  
Lord

For tyranny subdued,

And for the sway of equity renewed,  
For liberty confirmed, and peace restored !

## X

But hark — the summons ! — down the  
placid lake

Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower  
bells;

Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams  
would wake

The tender insects sleeping in their colls;  
Bright shines the Sun — and not a breeze to  
shake

The drops that tip the melting icicles. 210  
*O, enter now his temple gate !*

Inviting words — perchance already flung  
(As the crowd press devoutly down the  
aisle

Of some old Minster's venerable pile)  
From voices into zealous passion stung,

While the tubed engine feels the inspiring  
blast,

And has begun — its clouds of sound to  
cast

Forth towards empyreal Heaven,  
As if the fretted roof were riven.

Us, humbler ceremonies now await; 220

But in the bosom, with devout respect  
The banner of our joy we will erect,  
And strength of love our souls shall ele-  
vate:

For to a few collected in his name,  
Their heavenly Father will incline an ear  
Gracious to service hallowed by its aim; —  
Awake ! the majesty of God revere !

Go — and with foreheads meekly bowed  
Present your prayers — go — and rejoice  
aloud —

The Holy One will hear ! 230  
And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith sin-  
cere,

Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,  
Shall simply feel and purely meditate —  
Of warnings — from the unprecedented  
night,

Which, in our time, the impious have dis-  
closed;

And of more arduous duties thence imposed  
Upon the future advocates of right;

Of mysteries revealed,  
And judgments unrepealed,

Of earthly revolution, 240  
And final retribution, —

To his omniscience will appear  
An offering not unworthy to find place,  
On this high DAY of THANKS, before the  
Throne of Grace !

## ODE

1816. 1816

## I

IMAGINATION — ne'er before content,  
But aye ascending, restless in her pride  
From all that martial feats could yield  
To her desires, or to her hopes present —

Stooped to the Victory, on that Belgic field,  
Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,

And with the embrace was satisfied.

— Fly, ministers of Fame,

With every help that ye from earth and  
heaven may claim !

Bear through the world these tidings of de-  
light ! 10

— Hours, Days, and Months, have borne  
them in the sight

Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower  
That landward stretches from the sea,

The morning's splendours to devour;

But this swift travel scorns the company

Of irksome change, or threats from saddening power.

— *The shock is given — the Adversaries bleed —*

*Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!*

Joyful annunciation! — it went forth —

It pierced the caverns of the sluggish North — 20

It found no barrier on the ridge  
Of Andes — frozen gulphs became its bridge —

The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight —  
Upon the Lakes of Asia 't is bestowed —  
The Arabian desert shapes a willing road

Across her burning breast,  
For this refreshing incense from the West! —  
— Where snakes and hons breed,

Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,

Wherever fruits are gathered, and where'er  
The upturned soil receives the hopeful seed — 11

While the Sun rules, and cross the shades of night

The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!

The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,

And in its sparkling progress read  
Of virtue crowned with glory's deathless meed:

Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,  
And slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats are done;

Even the proud Realm, from whose distracted borders

This messenger of good was launched in air,  
France, humbled France, amid her wild disorders, 11

Feels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,

That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,  
And utter England's name with sadly-plausive voice.

11

O genuine glory, pure renown!

And well might it beseech that mighty Town

Into whose bosom earth's best treasures flow,

To whom all persecuted men retreat;

If a new Temple lift her votive brow

High on the shore of silver Thames — to greet 50

The peaceful guest advancing from afar.

Bright be the Fabric, as a star

Fresh risen, and beautiful within! — there meet

Dependence infinite, proportion just;

A Pile that Grace approves, and Time can trust

With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

111

But if the valiant of this land

In reverential modesty demand,

That all observance, due to them, be paid

Where their serene progenitors are laid; 60  
Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-like sages,

England's illustrious sons of long, long ages;

Be it not unordained that solemn rites,

Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,

Shall be performed at pregnant intervals;

Commemoration holy that unites

The living generations with the dead;

By the deep soul-moving sense

Of religious eloquence, —

By visual pomp, and by the tie 70

Of sweet and threatening harmony;

Soft notes, awful as the omen

Of destructive tempests coming,

And escaping from that sadness

Into elevated gladness:

While the white-robed choir attendant,

Under mouldering banners pendant,

Provoke all potent symphonies to raise

Songs of victory and praise,

For them who bravely stood unhurt, or bled 80

With medicable wounds, or found their graves

Upon the battle field, or under ocean's waves;

Or were conducted home in single state,

And long procession — there to lie,

Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,

Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

IV

Nor will the God of peace and love

Such martial service disapprove.

He guides the Pestilence — the cloud

Of locusts travels on his breath; 90

The region that in hope was ploughed.

His drought consumes, his mildew taints  
with death;

He springs the hushed Voleano's mine,  
He puts the Earthquake on her still de-  
sign,

Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest  
sink,

And, drinking towns and cities, still can  
drink

Cities and towns — 't is Thou — the work  
is Thine ! —

The fierce tornado sleeps within thy  
courts —

He hears the word — he flies —

And navies perish in their ports; <sup>100</sup>  
For Thou art angry with thine enemies !

For these, and mourning for our errors,

And sins, that point their terrors,

We bow our heads before Thee, and we  
laud

And magnify thy name, Almighty God !

But Man is thy most awful instru-  
ment,

In working out a pure intent;

Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling  
mail,

And for thy righteous purpose they pre-  
vail;

Thine arm from peril guards the coasts

Of them who in thy laws delight: <sup>111</sup>

Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful  
fight,

Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts !

## V

Forbear: — to Thee —

Father and Judge of all, with fervent  
tongue

But in a gentler strain

Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong,

(Too quick and keen) incited to disdain

Of pity pleading from the heart in vain —

To THEE — To THEE — <sup>120</sup>

Just God of christianised Humanity,

Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks  
ascend,

That thou hast brought our warfare to an  
end,

And that we need no second victory !

Blest, above measure blest,

If on thy love our Land her hopes shall  
rest,

And all the Nations labour to fulfil

Thy law, and live henceforth in peace, in  
pure good will.

## INVOCATION TO THE EARTH

FEBRUARY 1816

1816. 1816

Composed immediately after the "Thanks-  
giving Ode," to which it may be considered as  
a second part.

## I

"Rest, rest, perturbed Earth !

O rest, thou doleful Mother of Man-  
kind !"

A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than  
the wind:

"From regions where no evil thing has  
birth

I come — thy stains to wash away,

Thy cherished fetters to unbind,

And open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.

The Heavens are thronged with martyrs  
that have risen

From out thy noisome prison;

The penal caverns groan <sup>10</sup>

With tens of thousands rent from off the  
tree

Of hopeful life, — by battle's whirlwind  
blown

Into the deserts of Eternity.

Unpitied havoc ! Victims unlamented !

But not on high, where madness is resented,

And murder causes some sad tears to flow,

Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,

The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly  
augmented.

## II

"False Parent of Mankind !

Obdurate, proud, and blind, <sup>20</sup>

I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,

Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse !

Scattering this far-fetched moisture from  
my wings,

Upon the act a blessing I implore,

Of which the rivers in their secret springs,

The rivers stained so oft with human gore,

Are conscious; — may the like return no  
more !

May Discord — for a Seraph's care

Shall be attended with a bolder prayer —

May she, who once disturbed the seats of  
bliss <sup>30</sup>

These mortal spheres above,

Be chained for ever to the black abyss.

And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and  
love,

And merciful desires, thy sanctity ap-  
prove ! ”  
The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,  
And the pure vision closed in darkness in-  
finite.

## ODE

1816. 1816

— Carmina possumus  
Donare, et pretium dicere muneris.  
Non incisa notis marmora publicis,  
Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis  
Post mortem ducibus  
— clarius indicant  
Laudes, quam — Pierides, neque,  
Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,  
Mercedem tuleris — HOR. CAR. 8, Lib. 4

I

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed  
the latch

On the tired household of corporeal sense,  
And Fancy, keeping unreluctant watch,  
Was free her choicest favours to dispense;  
I saw, in wondrous perspective displayed,  
A landscape more august than happiest skill  
Of pencil ever clothed with light and shade;  
An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,  
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,  
And stately forest where the wild deer rove;  
Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,  
And scattered rural farms of aspect bright;  
And, here and there, between the pastoral  
downs,

The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.  
Fair prospect, such as Britain only shows !  
But not a living creature could be seen  
Through its wide circuit, that, in deep repose,  
And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,  
Lay hushed; till — through a portal in the  
sky

Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a storm,  
Opening before the sun's triumphant eye —  
Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form !  
Earthward it glided with a swift descent:  
Saint George himself this Visitant must be;  
And, ere a thought could ask on what intent  
He sought the regions of Humanity,  
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified  
City and field and flood; — aloud it cried —

“ Though from my celestial home,  
Like a Champion, armed I come; 30  
On my helm the dragon crest,  
And the red cross on my breast;  
I, the Guardian of this Land,  
Speak not now of toilsome duty;

Well obeyed was that command —  
Whence bright days of festive beauty;  
Haste, Virgins, haste ! — the flowers which  
summer gave  
Have perished in the field;  
But the green thickets plenteously shall yield  
Fit garlands for the brave, 40  
That will be welcome, if by you entwined;  
Haste, Virgins, haste; and you, ye Matrons  
grave,

Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,  
And gather what ye find  
Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs —  
To deck your stern Defenders' modest brows !  
Such simple gifts prepare,  
Though they have gained a worthier meed;  
And in due time shall share  
Those palms and amaranthine wreaths 50  
Unto their martyred Countrymen decreed,  
In realms where everlasting freshness  
breathes ! ”

II

And lo ! with crimson banners proudly  
streaming,  
And upright weapons innocently gleaming,  
Along the surface of a spacious plain  
Advance in order the redoubted Bands,  
And there receive green chaplets from the  
hands

Of a fair female train —  
Maids and Matrons, dight  
In robes of dazzling white; 60

While from the crowd bursts forth a rap-  
turous noise

By the cloud-capt hills retorted;  
And a throng of rosy boys  
In loose fashion tell their joys;

And grey-haired sires, on staffs supported,  
Look round, and by their smiling seem to  
say,

Thus strives a grateful Country to display  
The mighty debt which nothing can repay !

III

Anon before my sight a palace rose  
Built of all precious substances, — so pure  
And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows 71  
Ability like splendour to endure:

Entered, with streaming thousands, through  
the gate,

I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome  
of state,

A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate  
The heaven of sable night



With starry lustre; yet had power to throw  
 Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,  
 Upon a princely company below,  
 While the vault rang with choral harmony,  
 Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath  
 the roaring sea. 81  
 — No sooner ceased that peal, than on the  
 verge  
 Of exultation hung a dirge  
 Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,  
 That kindled recollections  
 Of agonised affections;  
 And, though some tears the strain attended,  
 The mournful passion ended  
 In peace of spirit, and sublime content !

## IV

But garlands wither; festal shows depart, 86  
 Like dreams themselves; and sweetest sound —  
 (Albeit of effect profound)  
 It was — and it is gone !  
 Victorious England ! bid the silent Art  
 Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,  
 Those high achievements; even as she arrayed  
 With second life the deed of Marathon  
 Upon Athenian walls;  
 So may she labour for thy civic halls:  
 And be the guardian spaces 90  
 Of consecrated places,  
 As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient toil;  
 And let imperishable Columns rise  
 Fixed in the depths of this courageous soil;  
 Expressive signals of a glorious strife,  
 And competent to shed a spark divine  
 Into the torpid breast of daily life; —  
 Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,  
 The morning sun may shine  
 With gratulation thoroughly benign ! 110

## V

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from Jove  
 And sage Mnemosyne, — full long debarred  
 From your first mansions, exiled all too long  
 From many a hallowed stream and grove,  
 Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,  
 Chanting for patriot heroes the reward  
 Of never-dying song !

Now (for, though Truth descending from above  
 The Olympian summit hath destroyed for aye  
 Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move, 120  
 Spared for obeisance from perpetual love  
 For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)  
 Now, on the margin of some spotless fountain,  
 Or top serene of unmolested mountain,  
 Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,  
 And for a moment meet the soul's desires !  
 That I, or some more favoured Bard, may hear  
 What ye, celestial Maids ! have often sung  
 Of Britain's acts, — may catch it with rapt ear,  
 And give the treasure to our British tongue !  
 So shall the characters of that proud page  
 Support their mighty theme from age to age;  
 And, in the desert places of the earth,  
 When they to future empires have given birth,  
 So shall the people gather and believe  
 The bold report, transferred to every clime;  
 And the whole world, not envious but admiring,  
 And to the like aspiring,  
 Own — that the progeny of this fair Isle  
 Had power as lofty actions to achieve 140  
 As were performed in man's heroic prime;  
 Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held  
 Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,  
 A corresponding virtue to beguile  
 The hostile purpose of wide-wasting Time —  
 That not in vain they laboured to secure,  
 For their great deeds, perpetual memory,  
 And fame as largely spread as land and sea,  
 By Works of spirit high and passion pure !

## ODE

1816. 1816

## I

WHO rises on the banks of Seine,  
 And binds her temples with the civic  
 wrath ?  
 What joy to read the promise of her mien !  
 How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings  
 beneath !

But they are ever playing,  
 And twinkling in the light,  
 And, if a breeze be straying,  
 That breeze she will invite;  
 And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,  
 And calls a look of love into her face, 10  
 And spreads her arms, as if the general air  
 Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.  
 — Melt, Principalities, before her melt!  
 Her love ye bailed — her wrath have felt!  
 But She through many a change of form  
 hath gone,  
 And stands amidst you now an armed crea-  
 ture,  
 Whose panoply is not a thing put on,  
 But the live scales of a portentous nature;  
 That, having forced its way from birth to  
 birth,  
 Stalks round — abhorred by Heaven, a ter-  
 ror to the Earth! 20

## II

I marked the breathings of her dragon  
 crest:  
 My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,  
 In many a midnight vision bowed  
 Before the ominous aspect of her spear;  
 Whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,  
 Threatened her foes, — or, pompously at  
 rest,  
 Seemed to bisect her orbèd shield,  
 As stretches a blue bar of solid cloud  
 Across the setting sun and all the fiery  
 west.

## III

So did she daunt the Earth, and God  
 defy!  
 And, wheresoe'er she spread her sove-  
 reignty,  
 Pollution tainted all that was most pure.  
 — Have we not known — and live we not  
 to tell —  
 That Justice seemed to hear her final  
 knell?  
 Faith buried deeper in her own deep breast  
 Her stores, and sighed to find them inse-  
 cure!  
 And Hope was maddened by the drops that  
 fell  
 From shades, her chosen place of short-  
 lived rest.  
 Shame followed shame, and woe supplanted  
 woe —  
 Is this the only change that time can show?

How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye pa-  
 tient Heavens, how long?  
 — Infirm ejaculation! from the tongue 41  
 Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong  
 Up to the measure of accorded night,  
 And daring not to feel the majesty of  
 right!

## IV

Weak Spirits are there — who would ask,  
 Upon the pressure of a painful thing,  
 The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;  
 Or let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,  
 Among the lurking powers 50  
 Of herbs and lowly flowers,  
 Or seek, from saints above, miraculous aid —  
 That Man may be accomplished for a task  
 Which his own nature hath enjoined; —  
 and why?  
 If, when that interference hath relieved  
 him,

He must sink down to languish  
 In worse than former helplessness — and lie  
 Till the caves roar, — and, imbe-  
 cility  
 Again engendering anguish,  
 The same weak wish returns, that had be-  
 fore deceived him. 60

## V

But Thou, supreme Disposer! may'st not  
 speed  
 The course of things, and change the creed  
 Which hath been held aloft before men's  
 sight  
 Since the first framing of societies,  
 Whether, as bards have told in ancient song,  
 Built up by soft seducing harmonies;  
 Or prest together by the appetite,  
 And by the power, of wrong.

## THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA

1812-13

1816. 1816

HUMANITY, delighting to behold  
 A fond reflection of her own decay,  
 Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,  
 Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen  
 day,  
 In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,  
 As though his weakness were disturbed by  
 pain:  
 Or, if a juster fancy should allow

An undisputed symbol of command,  
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,  
Infirmly grasped within a palsied hand. 10  
These emblems suit the helpless and forlorn;  
But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was — dread Winter ! who beset,  
Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,  
That host, when from the regions of the Pole  
They shrunk, insane ambition's barren goal —  
That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied  
Their God, and placed their trust in human pride !

As fathers persecute rebellious sons,  
He smote the blossoms of their warrior youth; 20

He called on Frost's inexorable tooth  
Life to consume in Manhood's firmest hold;  
Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs;

For why — unless for liberty enrolled  
And sacred home — ah ! why should hoary Age be bold ?

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,  
But fleetier far the pinions of the Wind,  
Which from Siberian caves the Monarch freed,  
And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,  
And bade the Snow their ample backs bestride, 30

And to the battle ride.  
No pitying voice commands a halt,  
No courage can repel the dire assault;  
Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and blind,  
Whole legions sink, and, in one instant, find  
Burial and death: look for them — and desery,

When morn returns, beneath the clear blue sky,  
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy !

## ON THE SAME OCCASION

1816. 1816

YE Storms, resound the praises of your King !  
And ye mild Seasons — in a sunny clime,  
Midway on some high hill, while father Time

Looks on delighted — meet in festal ring,  
And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing !  
Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and fruits, and flowers,

Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety showers,

And the dire flapping of his hoary wing !  
Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green grass;

With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report your gain;

Whisper it to the billows of the main,  
And to the aerial zephyrs as they pass,  
That old decrepit Winter — *He* hath slain  
That Host, which rendered all your bounties vain !

"BY MOSCOW SELF-DEVOTED  
TO A BLAZE"

1816. 1832

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze  
Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood  
Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood;  
The unfeeling Elements no claim shall raise  
To rob our Human-nature of just praise  
For what she did and suffered. Pledges sure

Of a deliverance absolute and pure  
She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten ways

Of Providence. But now did the Most High

Exalt his still small voice; — to quell that Host

Gathered his power, a manifest ally;  
He, whose heaped waves confounded the proud boast

Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and Frost,

"Finish the strife by deadliest victory !"

THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS  
OF HOCHHEIM

1816. 1827

ABRUPTLY paused the strife; — the field throughout

Resting upon his arms each warrior stood,  
Checked in the very act and deed of blood,  
With breath suspended, like a listening scout.  
O Silence ! thou wert mother of a shout

That through the texture of yon azure dome  
Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest home  
Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout !  
The barrier Rhine hath flashed, through  
battle-smoke,  
On men who gaze heart-smitten by the  
view,  
As if all Germany had felt the shock !  
— Fly, wretched Gauls ! ere they the charge  
renew  
Who have seen — themselves now casting  
off the yoke —  
The unconquerable Stream his course pur-  
sue.

SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY  
JOHN SOBIESKI

FEBRUARY 1816

1816. 1816

Oh, for a kindling touch from that pure  
flame  
Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice  
Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,  
In words like these: "Up, Voice of song !  
proclaim  
Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim:  
For lo ! the Imperial City stands released  
From bondage threatened by the embattled  
East,  
And Christendom respire; from guilt and  
shame  
Redeemed, from miserable fear set free  
By one day's feat, one mighty victory.  
— Chant the Deliverer's praise in every  
tongue !  
The cross shall spread, the crescent hath  
waxed dim;  
He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is  
sung,  
HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD, AND GOD  
BY HIM."

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE  
OF WATERLOO

FEBRUARY 1816

1816. 1816

(The last six lines intended for an Inscription.)

INTREPID sons of Albion ! not by you  
Is life despised; ah no, the spacious earth

Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of  
birth,  
So many objects to which love is due:  
Ye slight not life — to God and Nature true;  
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,  
When duty bids you bleed in open war:  
Hence hath your prowess quelled that im-  
pious crew.  
Heroes ! — for instant sacrifice prepared;  
Yet filled with ardour and on triumph bent  
'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident —  
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter  
spared  
To guard the fallen, and consummate the  
event,  
Your Country rears this sacred Monument !

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE  
OF WATERLOO

FEBRUARY 1816

1816. 1816

THE Bard — whose soul is meek as dawn-  
ing day,  
Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,  
Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,  
As recognising one Almighty sway:  
He — whose experienced eye can pierce the  
array  
Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,  
The aspiring heads of future things appear,  
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled  
away —  
Assoiled from all encumbrance of our time,  
He only, if such breathe, in strains devout  
Shall comprehend this victory sublime;  
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,  
The triumph hail, which from their peace-  
ful clime  
Angels might welcome with a choral shout !

"EMPERORS AND KINGS, HOW  
OFT HAVE TEMPLES RUNG"

1816. 1827

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have temples  
rung  
With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's  
scorn !  
How oft above their altars have been hung  
Trophies that led the good and wise to  
mourn

Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,  
 And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung !  
 Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory,  
     Peace is sprung;  
 In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.  
 Glory to arms ! But, conscious that the  
     nerve  
 Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed  
 Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear  
     to swerve !  
 Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor's  
     creed  
 Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve  
 Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROY-  
 ALIST, ON THE DISINTER-  
 MENT OF THE REMAINS OF  
 THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

1816. 1816

DEAR Reliques ! from a pit of vilest mould  
 Uprisen — to lodge among ancestral kings;  
 And to inflict shame's salutary stings  
 On the remorseless hearts of men grown old  
 In a blind worship; men perversely bold  
 Even to this hour, — yet, some shall now  
     forsake  
 Their monstrous Idol if the dead e'er  
     spake,  
 To warn the living; if truth were ever told  
 By aught redeemed out of the hollow grave:  
 O murdered Prince ! meek, loyal, pious,  
     brave !  
 The power of retribution once was given:  
 But 't is a rueful thought that willow bands  
 So often tie the thunder-wielding hands  
 Of Justice sent to earth from highest  
     Heaven !

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE  
 FIRST BOOK OF THE ÆNEID

1816. 1832

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PHILOLOGICAL  
 MUSEUM

Your letter, reminding me of an expectation  
 I some time since held out to you of allowing  
 some specimens of my translation from the  
 Æneid to be printed in the Philological Mu-  
 seum, was not very acceptable; for I had aban-  
 doned the thought of ever sending into the  
 world any part of that experiment — for it

was nothing more — an experiment begun for  
 amusement, and I now think a less fortunate  
 one than when I first named it to you. Hav-  
 ing been displeased in modern translations  
 with the additions of incongruous matter, I be-  
 gan to translate with a resolve to keep clear of  
 that fault, by adding nothing; but I became  
 convinced that a spirited translation can  
 scarcely be accomplished in the English lan-  
 guage without admitting a principle of com-  
 pensation. On this point, however, I do not  
 wish to insist, and merely send the following  
 passage, taken at random, from a wish to com-  
 ply with your request. W. W.

BUT Cytherea, studious to invent  
 Arts yet untried, upon new counsels bent,  
 Resolves that Cupid, changed in form and  
     face  
 To young Ascanius, should assume his  
     place;  
 Present the maddening gifts, and kindle  
     heat  
 Of passion at the bosom's inmost seat.  
 She dreads the treacherous house, the  
     double tongue;  
 She burns, she frets by Juno's rancour  
     stung;  
 The calm of night is powerless to remove  
 These cares, and thus she speaks to winged  
     Love: 10

"O son, my strength, my power ! who  
     dost despise  
 (What, save thyself, none dares through  
     earth and skies)  
 The giant-quelling bolts of Jove, I flee,  
 O son, a suppliant to thy deity !  
 What perils meet Æneas in his course,  
 How Juno's hate with unrelenting force  
 Pursues thy brother — this to thee is  
     known;  
 And oft-times hast thou made my griefs  
     thine own.  
 Him now the generous Dido by soft chains  
 Of bland entreaty at her court detains; 20  
 Junonian hospitalities prepare  
 Such apt occasion that I dread a snare.  
 Hence, ere some hostile God can intervene,  
 Would I, by previous wiles, inflame the  
     queen  
 With passion for Æneas, such strong love  
 That at my beck, mine only, she shall  
     move.  
 Hear, and assist; — the father's mandate  
     calls

His young Ascanius to the Tyrian walls;  
He comes, my dear delight, — and costliest things

Preserved from fire and flood for presents brings. 30

Him will I take, and in close covert keep,  
'Mid groves Idalian, lulled to gentle sleep,  
Or on Cythera's far-sequestered steep,  
That he may neither know what hope is mine,

Nor by his presence traverse the design.  
Do thou, but for a single night's brief space,  
Dissemble; be that boy in form and face!  
And when enraptured Dido shall receive  
Thee to her arms, and kisses interweave  
With many a fond embrace, while joy runs high, 40

And goblets crown the proud festivity,  
Instil thy subtle poison, and inspire,  
At every touch, an unsuspected fire."

Love, at the word, before his mother's sight

Puts off his wings, and walks, with proud delight,

Like young Iulus; but the gentlest dews  
Of slumber Venus sheds, to circumsure  
The true Ascanius steeped in placid rest;  
Then wafts him, cherished on her careful breast,

Through upper air to an Idalian glade, 50  
Where he on soft *amaracus* is laid.

With breathing flowers embraced, and fragrant shade.

But Cupid, following cheerily his guide  
Achates, with the gifts to Carthage hied;  
And, as the hall he entered, there, between  
The sharers of her golden couch, was seen  
Reclined in festal pomp the Tyrian queen.  
The Trojans, too (*Æneas* at their head),  
On couches lie, with purple overspread:  
Meantime in canisters is heaped the bread,  
Pellucid water for the hands is borne, 60  
And napkins of smooth texture, finely shorn.

Within are fifty handmaids, who prepare,  
As they in order stand, the dainty fare;  
And fume the household deities with store  
Of odorous incense; while a hundred more  
Matched with an equal number of like age,

But each of manly sex, a docile page,  
Marshal the banquet, giving with due grace  
To cup or viand its appointed place. 70  
The Tyrians rushing in, an eager band,

Their painted couches seek, obedient to command,

They look with wonder on the gifts — they gaze

Upon Iulus, dazzled with the rays  
That from his ardent countenance are flung,

And charmed to hear his simulating tongue;

Nor pass unpraised the robe and veil divine,

Round which the yellow flowers and wandering foliage twine.

But chiefly Dido, to the coming ill  
Devoted, strives in vain her vast desires to fill; 80

She views the gifts; upon the child then turns

Insatiable looks, and gazing burns.

To ease a father's cheated love he hung

Upon *Æneas*, and around him clung;

Then seeks the queen; with her his arts he tries;

She fastens on the boy enamoured eyes,  
Clasps in her arms, nor weens (O lot unblest!)

How great a God, incumbent o'er her breast,

Would fill it with his spirit. He, to please

His Acidalian mother, by degrees 90

Blots out *Sichæus*, studious to remove

The dead, by influx of a living love,

By stealthy entrance of a perilous guest.

Troubling a heart that had been long at rest.

Now when the viands were withdrawn, and ceased

The first division of the splendid feast.

While round a vacant board the chiefs recline,

Huge goblets are brought forth; they crown the wine;

Voices of gladness roll the walls around;

Those gladsome voices from the courts rebound; 100

From gilded rafters many a blazing light

Depends, and torches overcome the night.

The minutes fly -- till, at the queen's command,

A bowl of state is offered to her hand:

Then she, as *Belus* wont, and all the line

From *Belus*, filled it to the brim with wine;

Silence ensued. "O Jupiter, whose care  
Is hospitable dealing, grant my prayer!  
Productive day be this of lasting joy  
To Tyrians, and these exiles driven from  
Troy;

110

A day to future generations dear!  
Let Bacchus, donor of soul-quick'ning  
cheer,

Be present; kindly Juno, be thou near!  
And, Tyrians, may your choicest favours  
wait

Upon this hour, the bond to celebrate!"  
She spake and shed an offering on the  
board;

Then sipped the bowl whence she the wine  
had poured

And gave to Bitias, urging the prompt lord;  
He raised the bowl, and took a long deep  
draught;

Then every chief in turn the beverage  
quaffed.

120

Graced with redundant hair, Iopas sings  
The lore of Atlas, to resounding strings,  
The labours of the Sun, the lunar wander-  
ings;

Whence human kind, and brute; what  
natural powers

Engender lightning, whence are falling  
showers.

He haunts Arcturus, — that fraternal twain,  
The glittering Bears, — the Pleiads fraught  
with rain;

— Why suns in winter, shunning heaven's  
steep heights

Post seaward, — what impedes the tardy  
nights.

The learned song from Tyrian hearers  
draws

130

Loud shouts, — the Trojans echo the ap-  
plause.

— But, lengthening out the night with con-  
verse new,

Large draughts of love unhappy Dido drew;  
Of Priam asked, of Hector — o'er and o'er —  
What arms the son of bright Aurora  
wore; —

What steeds the car of Diomed could  
boast;

Among the leaders of the Grecian host.  
How looked Achilles, their dread para-  
mount —

"But nay — the fatal wiles, O guest, re-  
count,

Retrace the Grecian cunning from its source,

Your own grief and your friends? — your  
wandering course;

141

For now, till this seventh summer have ye  
ranged

The sea, or trod the earth, to peace es-  
tranged."

## A FACT. AND AN IMAGINATION

OR, CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE  
SEASHORE

1816. 1820

The first and last fourteen lines of this poem  
each make a sonnet, and were composed as such;  
but I thought that by intermediate lines they  
might be connected so as to make a whole.  
One or two expressions are taken from Milton's  
*History of England*.

THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,  
Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,  
To aid a covert purpose, cried — "O ye  
Approaching Waters of the deep, that  
share

With this green isle my fortunes, come not  
where

Your Master's throne is set." — Deaf was  
the Sea;

Her waves rolled on, respecting his decree  
Less than they heed a breath of wanton  
air.

— Then Canute, rising from the invaded  
throne,

Said to his servile Courtiers, — "Poor the  
reach,

10

The undisguised extent, of mortal sway!

He only is a King, and he alone  
Deserves the name (this truth the billows  
preach)

Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and  
heaven, obey."

This just reproof the prosperous Dane  
Drew, from the influx of the main,  
For some whose rugged northern mouths  
would strain

At oriental flattery;

And Canute (fact more worthy to be  
known)

From that time forth did for his brows  
disown

20

The ostentatious symbol of a crown;

Esteeming earthly royalty  
Contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,

Rich theme of England's fondest praise,  
Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken;  
To cheer the remnant of his host  
When he was driven from coast to coast,  
Distressed and harassed, but with mind  
unbroken:

"My faithful followers, lo! the tide is  
spent 30

That rose, and steadily advanced to fill  
The shores and channels, working Nature's  
will

Among the mazy streams that backward  
went,

And in the sluggish pools where ships are  
pent:

And now, his task performed, the flood  
stands still,

At the green base of many an inland hill,  
In placid beauty and sublime content!  
Such the repose that sage and hero find;  
Such measured rest the sedulous and good  
Of humbler name; whose souls do, like  
the flood 40

Of Ocean, press right on; or gently wind,  
Neither to be diverted nor withstood,  
Until they reach the bounds by Heaven  
assigned."

## TO DORA

1816. 1820

The complaint in my eyes which gave occasion to this address to my daughter first showed itself as a consequence of inflammation, caught at the top of Kirkstone, when I was over-heated by having carried up the ascent my eldest son, a lusty infant. Frequently has the disease recurred since, leaving my eyes in a state which has often prevented my reading for months, and makes me at this day incapable of bearing without injury any strong light by day or night. My acquaintance with books has therefore been far short of my wishes; and on this account, to acknowledge the services daily and hourly done me by my family and friends, this note is written.

"A *LITTLE* onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on!"  
— What trick of memory to my voice hath  
brought

This mournful iteration? For though  
Time,

The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered, on  
this brow

Planting his favourite silver diadem,  
Nor he, nor minister of his — intent  
To run before him — hath enrolled me yet,  
Though not unmenaced, among those who  
lean

Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight. 10  
— O my own Dora, my beloved child!

Should that day come — but hark! the  
birds salute

The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the  
east;

For me, thy natural leader, once again  
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst

A tottering infant, with compliant stoop  
From flower to flower supported; but to  
curb

Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er  
the lawn,

Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge  
Of foaming torrents. — From thy orisons 20

Come forth; and, while the morning air is  
yet

Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,  
Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy  
way,

And now precede thee, winding to and fro,  
Till we by perseverance gain the top  
Of some smooth ridge, whose brink pre-  
cipitous

Kindles intense desire for powers withheld  
From this corporeal frame; whereon who  
stands,

Is seized with strong incitement to push  
forth

His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge —  
dread thought, 30

For pastime plunge — into the "abrupt  
abyss," —

Where ravens spread their plummy vans, at  
ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I con-  
duct

Through woods and spacious forests, — to  
behold

There, how the Original of human art,  
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and  
erects

Her temples, fearless for the stately work,  
Though waves, to every breeze, its high-  
arched roof,

And storms the pillars rock. But we such  
schools

Of reverential awe will chiefly seek 40  
In the still summer noon, while beams of  
light,



Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond  
Traceably gliding through the dusk, re-  
call

To mind the living presences of nuns;  
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,  
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom  
Of those terrestrial fabries, where they  
serve,

To Christ, the Sun of righteousness, es-  
poused.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,  
To these glad eyes from bondage freed,  
again

Lie open; and the book of Holy Writ,  
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield  
To heights more glorious still, and into  
shades

More awful, where, advancing hand in  
hand,

We may be taught, O Darling of my care !  
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,  
And consecrate our lives to truth and love.

## TO —

### ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN

1816. 1820

Written at Rydal Mount. The lady was  
Miss Blackett, then residing with Mr. Montagu  
Burgoyne at Fox-Ghyll. We were tempted to  
remain too long upon the mountain; and I im-  
prudently, with the hope of shortening the way,  
led her among the crags and down a steep  
slope which entangled us in difficulties that  
were met by her with much spirit and courage.

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,  
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed  
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;  
Awed, delighted, and amazed !

Potent was the spell that bound thee,  
Not unwilling to obey;  
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,  
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo ! the dwindled woods and meadows;  
What a vast abyss is there !  
Lo ! the clouds, the soleinn shadows,  
And the glistenings — heavenly fair !

And a record of commotion  
Which a thousand ridges yield;

Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean  
Gleaming like a silver shield !

Maiden ! now take flight; — inherit  
Alps or Andes — they are thine !  
With the morning's roseate Spirit,  
Sweep their length of snowy line;

20

Or survey their bright dominions  
In the gorgeous colours drest,  
Flung from off the purple pinions,  
Evening spreads throughout the west !

Thine are all the coral fountains  
Warbling in each sparry vault  
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;  
Listen to their songs ! — or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,  
Whither spiteful Satan steered;  
Or descend where the ark alighted,  
When the green earth re-appeared;

30

For the power of hills is on thee,  
As was witnessed through thine eye  
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee  
To confess their majesty !

### VERNAL ODE

1817. 1820

Composed at Rydal Mount, to place in view  
the immortality of succession where immor-  
tality is denied, as far as we know, to the indi-  
vidual creature.

Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam  
minimis. — *PLIN. Nat. Hist.*

## I

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,  
When all the fields with freshest green  
were dight,

Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye  
That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,  
The form and rich habiliments of One  
Whose countenance bore resemblance to

the sun,  
When it reveals, in evening majesty,  
Features half lost amid their own pure  
light.

Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air  
He hung, — then floated with angelic ease  
(Softening that bright effulgence by de-  
greens)

11

Till he had reached a summit sharp and bare,  
Where oft the venturous heifer drinks the  
noontide breeze.  
Upon the apex of that lofty cone  
Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone;  
Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the east  
Suddenly raised by some enchanter's power,  
Where nothing was; and firm as some old  
Tower  
Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest  
Waves high, embellished by a gleaming  
shower!

II

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings  
Rested a golden harp; — he touched the  
strings;  
And, after prelude of unearthly sound  
Poured through the echoing hills around,  
He sang —  
“No wintry desolations,  
Scorching blight or noxious dew,  
Affect my native habitations;  
Buried in glory, far beyond the scope  
Of man's inquiring gaze, but to his hope  
Imaged, though faintly, in the hue  
Profound of night's ethereal blue;  
And in the aspect of each radiant orb; —  
Some fixed, some wandering with no timid  
curb:  
But wandering star and fixed, to mortal  
eye,  
Blended in absolute serenity,  
And free from semblance of decline; —  
Fresh as if Evening brought their natal  
hour,  
Her darkness splendour gave, her silence  
power  
To testify of Love and Grace divine.

III

“What if those bright fires  
Shine subject to decay,  
Sons haply of extinguished sires,  
Themselves to lose their light, or pass away  
Like clouds before the wind,  
Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand  
bestows,  
Nightly, on human kind  
That vision of endurance and repose.  
— And though to every draught of vital  
breath  
Renewed throughout the bounds of earth or  
ocean,

The melancholy gates of Death  
Respond with sympathetic motion;  
Though all that feeds on nether air,  
Howe'er magnificent or fair,  
Grows but to perish, and entrust  
Its ruins to their kindred dust;  
Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during care,  
Her procreant vigils Nature keeps  
Amid the unfathomable deeps;  
And saves the peopled fields of earth  
From dread of emptiness or dearth.  
Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the  
sky

The foliaged head in cloud-like majesty,  
The shadow-casting race of trees survive:  
Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive  
Sweet flowers; — what living eye hath  
viewed  
Their myriads? — endlessly renewed,  
Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray;  
Where'er the subtle waters stray;  
Wherever sportive breezes bend  
Their course, or genial showers descend!  
Mortals, rejoice! the very Angels quit  
Their mansions unsusceptible of change,  
Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,  
And through your sweet vicissitudes to  
range!

IV

Oh, nursed at happy distance from the cares  
Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral  
Muse!  
That, to the sparkling crown Urania wears,  
And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,  
Prefer'st a garland culled from purple  
heath,  
Or blooming thicket moist with morning  
dews;  
Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to  
me?  
And was it granted to the simple ear  
Of thy contented votary  
Such melody to hear!  
Him rather suits it, side by side with thee,  
Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,  
While thy tired lute hangs on the hawthorn-  
tree,  
To lie and listen — till o'er-drows'd sense  
Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence —  
To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.  
— A slender sound! yet hoary Time  
Doth to the Soul exalt it with the chime  
Of all his years; — a company  
Of ages coming, ages gone;

(Nations from before them sweeping,  
Regions in destruction steeping.)  
But every awful note in unison  
With that faint utterance, which tells  
Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,  
For the pure keeping of those waxen  
cells;

Where She — a statist prudent to confer<sup>100</sup>  
Upon the common weal; a warrior bold,  
Radiant all over with unburnished gold,  
And armed with living spear for mortal  
fight;

A cunning forager  
That spreads no waste; a social builder;  
one

In whom all busy offices unite  
With all fine functions that afford de-  
light —  
Safe through the winter storm in quiet  
dwells !

v

And is She brought within the power<sup>110</sup>  
Of vision ? — o'er this tempting flower  
Hovering until the petals stay  
Her flight, and take its voice away ! —  
Observe each wing ! — a tiny van !  
The structure of her laden thigh,  
How fragile ! yet of ancestry  
Mysteriously remote and high;  
High as the imperial front of man;  
The roseate bloom on woman's cheek;  
The soaring eagle's curvèd beak;<sup>120</sup>  
The white plumes of the floating swan;  
Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane,  
Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain  
At which the desert trembles. — Humming  
Bee !

Thy sting was needless then, perchance un-  
known,

The seeds of malice were not sown;  
All creatures met in peace, from fierceness  
free,

And no pride blended with their dignity.  
— Tears had not broken from their source;  
Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean  
den;<sup>130</sup>

The golden years maintained a course  
Not undiversified though smooth and even;  
We were not mocked with glimpse and  
shadow then,

Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with  
men;

And earth and stars composed a universal  
heaven !

## ODE TO LYCORIS. MAY 1817

1817. 1820

The discerning reader, who is aware that in the poem of Ellen Irwin I was desirous of throwing the reader at once out of the old ballad, so as, if possible, to preclude a comparison between that mode of dealing with the subject and the mode I meant to adopt — may here perhaps perceive that this poem originated in the last four lines of the first stanza. Those specks of snow, reflected in the lake and so transferred, as it were, to the subaqueous sky, reminded me of the swans which the fancy of the ancient classic poets yoked to the car of Venus. Hence the tenor of the whole first stanza, and the name of Lycoris, which — with some readers who think my theology and classical allusion too far-fetched and therefore more or less unnatural and affected — will tend to unredress the sentiment that pervades these verses. But surely one who has written so much in verse as I have done may be allowed to retrace his steps in the regions of fancy which delighted him in his boyhood, when he first became acquainted with the Greek and Roman Poets. Before I read Virgil I was so strongly attached to Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* I read at school, that I was quite in a passion whenever I found him, in books of criticism, placed below Virgil. As to Homer, I was never weary of travelling over the scenes through which he led me. Classical literature affected me by its own beauty. But the truths of scripture having been entrusted to the dead languages, and these fountains having been recently laid open at the Reformation, an importance and a sanctity were at that period attached to classical literature that extended, as is obvious in Milton's *Lycidas*, for example, both to its spirit and form in a degree that can never be revived. No doubt the hackneyed and lifeless use into which mythology fell towards the close of the 17th century, and which continued through the 18th, disgusted the general reader with all allusion to it in modern verse; and though, in deference to this disgust, and also in a measure participating in it, I abstained in my earlier writings from all introduction of pagan fable, surely, even in its humble form, it may ally itself with real sentiment, as I can truly affirm it did in the present case.

I

AN age hath been when Earth was proud  
Of lustre too intense  
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed  
The front in self-defence.  
Who then, if Dian's crescent gleamed,

Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed,  
While on the wing the Urchin played,  
Could fearlessly approach the shade ?  
— Enough for one soft vernal day,  
If I, a bard of ebbing time,  
And nurtured in a fickle clime,  
May haunt this horned bay;  
Whose amorous water multiplies  
The sitting halcyon's vivid dyes;  
And smooths her liquid breast — to show  
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,  
White as the pair that slid along the  
    plains  
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins !

## II

In youth we love the darksome lawn  
Brushed by the owl's wing;  
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,  
And Autumn to the Spring.  
Sad fancies do we then affect,  
In luxury of disrespect  
To our own prodigal excess  
Of too familiar happiness.  
Lycoris (if such name befit  
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign !)  
When Nature marks the year's decline,  
Be ours to welcome it;  
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs  
Before the path of milder suns;  
Pleased while the sylvan world displays  
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;  
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the  
    knell  
Of the resplendent miracle.

## III

But something whispers to my heart  
That, as we downward tend,  
Lycoris ! life requires an *art*  
To which our souls must bend;  
A skill — to balance and supply;  
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,  
As soon it must, a sense to sip,  
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.  
Then welcome, above all, the Guest  
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,  
Seem to recall the Deity  
Of youth into the breast:  
May pensive Autumn ne'er present  
A claim to her disparagement !  
While blossoms and the budding spray  
Inspire us in our own decay;  
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal  
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul !

## TO THE SAME

1817. 1820

This as well as the preceding and the two  
that follow were composed in front of Rydal  
Mount and during my walks in the neighbour-  
hood. Nine-tenths of my verses have been  
murmured out in the open air: and here let  
me repeat what I believe has already appeared  
in print. One day a stranger having walked  
round the garden and grounds of Rydal Mount  
asked one of the female servants, who hap-  
pened to be at the door, permission to see her  
master's study. "This," said she, leading him  
forward, "is my master's library where he  
keeps his books, but his study is out of doors."  
After a long absence from home it has more  
than once happened that some one of my cot-  
tage neighbours has said — "Well, there he is;  
we are glad to hear him *booming* about again."  
Once more, in excuse for so much egotism, let  
me say, these notes are written for my familiar  
friends, and at their earnest request. Another  
time a gentleman whom James had conducted  
through the grounds asked him what kind of  
plants thrived best there: after a little consid-  
eration he answered — "Laurels." "That is,"  
said the stranger, "as it should be, don't you  
know that the laurel is the emblem of poetry,  
and that poets used on public occasions to be  
crowned with it?" James stared when the  
question was first put, but was doubtless much  
pleased with the information.

Enough of climbing toil! — Ambition treads  
Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep  
    and rough,

Or slippery even to peril ! and each step,  
As we for most uncertain recompence  
Mount toward the empire of the fickle clouds,  
Each weary step, dwarfing the world below,  
Induces, for its old familiar sights,  
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,  
With wonder mixed — that Man could e'er  
    be tied,

In anxious bondage, to such nice array   10  
And formal fellowship of petty things !

Oh ! 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this  
    life,

Making a truth and beauty of her own;  
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing  
    shades,

And gurgling rills, assist her in the work  
More efficaciously than realms outspread,  
As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze —  
Ocean and Earth contending for regard.

The umbrageous woods are left — how  
    far beneath !

But lo ! where darkness seems to guard the  
mouth 20  
Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are  
fringed

With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still  
And sultry air, depending motionless.  
Yet cool the space within, and not uncheered  
(As whose enters shall ere long perceive)  
By stealthy influx of the timid day  
Mingling with night, such twilight to compose  
As Numa loved ; when, in the Egerian grot,  
From the sage Nymph appearing at his wish,  
He gained what'er a regal mind might ask,  
Or need, of counsel breathed through lips  
divine. 31

Long as the heat shall rage, let that dim  
cave

Protect us, there deciphering as we may  
Diluvian records; or the sighs of Earth  
Interpreting; or counting for old Time  
His minutes, by reiterated drops,  
Audible tears, from some invisible source  
That deepens upon fancy — more and more  
Drawn toward the centre whence those  
sighs creep forth

To awe the lightness of humanity: 4  
Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,  
There let me see thee sink into a mood  
Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye  
Be calm as water when the winds are  
gone,

And no one can tell whither. Dearest  
Friend !

We two have known such happy hours  
together

That, were power granted to replace them  
(fetched

From out the pensive shadows where they  
lie)

In the first warmth of their original sun-  
shine,

Loth should I be to use it: passing sweet 50  
Are the domains of tender memory !

### THE LONGEST DAY

ADDRESSED TO MY DAUGHTER

1817. 1820

Suggested by the sight of my daughter  
(Dora) playing in front of Rydal Mount; and  
composed in a great measure the same after-  
noon. I have often wished to pair this poem  
upon the *longest* with one upon the *shortest*, day,  
and regret even now that it has not been done.

LET us quit the leafy arbour,  
And the torrent murmuring by;  
For the sun is in his harbour,  
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters  
Fashioned by the glowing light;  
All that breathe are thankful debtors  
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended  
Eve renews her calm career: 10  
For the day that now is ended,  
Is the longest of the year.

Dora ! sport, as now thou sportest,  
On this platform, light and free;  
Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,  
Are indifferent to thee !

Who would check the happy feeling  
That inspires the linnet's song ?  
Who would stop the swallow, wheeling  
On her pinions swift and strong ? 20

Yet at this impressive season,  
Words which tenderness can speak  
From the truths of homely reason,  
Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding  
Steal the landscape from the sight,  
I would urge this moral pleading,  
Last forerunner of " Good night ! "

SUMMER ebbs ; — each day that follows  
Is a reflux from on high, 30  
Tending to the darksome hollows  
Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,  
In his providence, assigned  
Such a gradual declination  
To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not ; — fruits redden,  
Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have blown,  
And the heart is loth to deaden  
Hopes that she so long hath known. 40

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden !  
And when thy decline shall come,  
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,  
Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapp'd in slumber,  
Fix thine eyes upon the sea  
That absorbs time, space, and number;  
Look thou to Eternity!

Follow thou the flowing river  
On whose breast are thither borne  
All deceived, and each deceiver, 50  
Through the gates of night and morn;

Through the year's successive portals;  
Through the bounds which many a star  
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals  
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled  
Toward the mighty gulf of things,  
And the mazy stream unravelled  
With thy best imaginings; 60

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,  
Think how pitiful that stay,  
Did not virtue give the meanest  
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,  
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown;  
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,  
While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it, — if thou shrink and tremble,  
Fairest damsel of the green, 70  
Thou wilt lack the only symbol  
That proclaims a genuine queen;

And ensures those palms of honour  
Which selected spirits wear,  
Bending low before the Donor,  
Lord of heaven's unchanging year!

## HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS

1817. 1820

Bunches of fern may often be seen wheeling about in the wind as here described. The particular bunch that suggested these verses was noticed in the Pass of Dunmail Raise. The verses were composed in 1817, but the application is for all times and places.

"WHO but hails the sight with pleasure  
When the wings of genius rise,

Their ability to measure  
With great enterprise;  
But in man was ne'er such daring  
As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing  
His brave spirit with the war in  
The stormy skies!

"Mark him, how his power he uses,  
Lays it by, at will resumes! 10  
Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses  
(Clouds and utter glooms!  
There, he wheels in downward mazes;  
Sunward now his flight he raises,  
Catches fire, as seems, and blazes  
With uninjured plumes!" —

## ANSWER

"Stranger, 't is no act of courage  
Which aloft thou dost discern;  
No bold *bird* gone forth to forage  
'Mid the tempest stern; 20  
But such mockery as the nations  
See, when public perturbations  
Lift men from their native stations  
Like yon TIT OF FERN;

"Such it is; the aspiring creature  
Soaring on undaunted wing,  
(So you fancied) is by nature  
A dull helpless thing,  
Dry and withered, light and yellow; —  
*That* to be the tempest's fellow! 30  
Wait -- and you shall see how hollow  
Its endeavouring!"

## THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

1817. 1820

Written at Rydal Mount. Thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers, by day and night, over this Pass, alone and with beloved friends.

I

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work.  
A deep delight the bosom thrills  
Oft as I pass along the fork  
Of these fraternal hills:  
Where, save the rugged road, we find  
No appanage of human kind,  
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock  
Seem not his handywork to mock  
By something cognizably shaped;  
Mockery — or model roughly hewn, 10

And left as if by earthquake strewn,  
Or from the Flood escaped:  
Altars for Druid service fit  
(But where no fire was ever lit,  
Unless the glow-worm to the skies  
Thence offer nightly sacrifice);  
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;  
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;  
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed —  
On which four thousand years have gazed!

II

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes! 21  
Ye snow-white lambs that trip  
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props  
Of restless ownership!  
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall  
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!  
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,  
All that the fertile valley shields;  
Wages of folly — baits of crime,  
Of life's uneasy game the stake, 31  
Playthings that keep the eyes awake  
Of drowsy, dotard Time; —  
O care! O guilt! — O vales and plains,  
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,  
A Genius dwells, that can subdue  
At once all memory of You, —  
Most potent when mists veil the sky,  
Mists that distort and magnify;  
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping  
breeze,  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies! 40

III

List to those shriller notes! — *that* march  
Perchance was on the blast,  
When, through this Height's inverted arch,  
Rome's earliest legion passed!  
— They saw, adventurously impelled,  
And older eyes than theirs beheld,  
This block — and yon, whose church-like  
frame  
Gives to this savage Pass its name.  
Aspiring Road! that lov'st to hide  
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn, 50  
Not seldom may the hour return  
When thou shalt be my guide:  
And I (as all men may find cause,  
When life is at a weary pause,  
And they have panted up the hill  
Of duty with reluctant will)  
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,  
For the rich bounties of constraint;

Whence oft invigorating transports flow  
That choice lacked courage to bestow! 60

IV

My Soul was grateful for delight  
That wore a threatening brow;  
A veil is lifted — can she slight  
The scene that opens now?  
Though habitation none appear,  
The greenness tells, man must be there;  
The shelter — that the perspective  
Is of the clime in which we live;  
Where Toil pursues his daily round;  
Where Pity sheds sweet tears — and Love,  
In woodbine bower or birchen grove, 71  
Inflicts his tender wound.  
— Who comes not hither ne'er shall know  
How beautiful the world below;  
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps  
The brook adown the rocky steeps.  
Farewell, thou desolate Domain!  
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,  
Carols like a shepherd-boy;  
And who is she? — Can that be Joy! 81  
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,  
Smoothly skims the meadows wide;  
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,  
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,  
"Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked  
dare,  
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion, fair!"

## LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR

1817. 1820

This arose out of a flash of moonlight that struck the ground when I was approaching the steps that lead from the garden at Rydal Mount to the front of the house. "From her sunk eye a stagnant tear stole forth" is taken, with some loss, from a discarded poem, "The Convict," in which occurred, when he was discovered lying in the cell, these lines: —

"But now he upraises the deep-sunken eye,  
The motion unsettles a tear;  
The silence of sorrow it seems to supply  
And asks of me — why I am here."

I

SMILE of the Moon! — for so I name  
That silent greeting from above;  
A gentle flash of light that came  
From her whom drooping captives love;

Or art thou of still higher birth?  
Thou that didst part the clouds of earth,  
My torpor to reprove!

II

Bright boon of pitying Heaven! — alas,  
I may not trust thy placid cheer!  
Pondering that Time to-night will pass 10  
The threshold of another year;  
For years to me are sad and dull;  
My very moments are too full  
Of hopelessness and fear.

III

And yet, the soul-awakening gleam,  
That struck perchance the farthest cone  
Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem  
To visit me, and me alone;  
Me, unapproached by any friend,  
Save those who to my sorrows lend 10  
Tears due unto their own.

IV

To-night the church-tower bells will ring  
Through these wild realms a festive peal:  
To the new year a welcoming;  
A tuneful offering for the weal  
Of happy millions lulled in sleep;  
While I am forced to watch and weep,  
By wounds that may not heal.

V

Born all too high, by wedlock raised  
Still higher — to be cast thus low! 10  
Would that mine eyes had never gazed  
On aught of more ambitious show  
Than the sweet flowerets of the fields  
— It is my royal state that yields  
This bitterness of woe.

VI

Yet how? — for I, if there be truth  
In the world's voice, was passing fair:  
And beauty, for confiding youth,  
Those shocks of passion can prepare  
That kill the bloom before its time;  
And blanch, without the owner's crime, 40  
The most resplendent hair.

VII

Unblest distinction! showered on me  
To bind a lingering life in chains:  
All that could quit my grasp, or flee,  
Is gone; — but not the subtle stains  
Fixed in the spirit; for even here

Can I be proud that jealous fear  
Of what I was remains.

VIII

A Woman rules my prison's key; 50  
A sister Queen, against the bent  
Of law and holiest sympathy,  
Detains me, doubtful of the event;  
Great God, who feel'st for my distress,  
My thoughts are all that I possess,  
O keep them innocent!

IX

Farewell desire of human aid,  
Which abject mortals vainly court!  
By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,  
Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport; 60  
Nought but the world-redeeming Cross  
Is able to supply my loss,  
My burthen to support.

X

Hark! the death-note of the year  
Sounded by the castle-clock!  
From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear  
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock;  
But oft the woods renewed their green,  
Ere the tired head of Scotland's Queen  
Reposed upon the block! 70

SEQUEL TO THE "BEGGARS," 1802

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER

1817. 1827

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?  
For whose free range the dædal earth  
Was filled with animated toys,  
And implements of frolic mirth;  
With tools for ready wit to guide;  
And ornaments of seemlier pride,  
More fresh, more bright, than princes wear;  
For what one moment flung aside,  
Another could repair;  
What good or evil have they seen 10  
Since I their pastime witnessed here,  
Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?  
I ask — but all is dark between!  
They met me in a genial hour,  
When universal nature breathed  
As with the breath of one sweet flower, —  
A time to overrule the power  
Of discontent, and check the birth  
Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,



The most familiar bane of life  
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed  
 Mortality to Earth !  
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,  
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran clear;  
 The lambs from rock to rock were bounding;  
 With songs the budded groves resounding;  
 And to my heart are still endeared  
 The thoughts with which it then was cheered;  
 The faith which saw that glad some pair  
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.  
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive — 31  
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,  
 Associates in that eager chase;  
 Ye, who within the blameless mind  
 Your favourite seat of empire find —  
 Kind Spirits ! may we not believe  
 That they, so happy and so fair  
 Through your sweet influence, and the care  
 Of pitying Heaven, at least were free  
 From touch of *deadly* injury ? 40  
 Destined whate'er their earthly doom,  
 For mercy and immortal bloom !

## THE PILGRIM'S DREAM

OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM

1818. 1820

I distinctly recollect the evening when these verses were suggested in 1818. It was on the road between Rydal and Grasmere, where Glow-worms abound. A Star was shining above the ridge of Longhrigg Fell, just opposite. I remember a critic, in some review or other, crying out against this piece. "What so monstrous," said he, "as to make a star talk to a glow-worm !" Poor fellow ! we know from this sage observation what the "primrose on the river's brim" was to him."

A PILGRIM, when the summer day  
 Had closed upon his weary way,  
 A lodging begged beneath a castle's roof;  
 But him the haughty Warder spurned;  
 And from the gate the Pilgrim turned,  
 To seek such covert as the field  
 Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,  
 Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along; and, pensively,  
 Halting beneath a shady tree, 10  
 Whose moss-grown root might serve for  
 couch or seat,  
 Fixed on a Star his upward eye;  
 Then, from the tenant of the sky

He turned, and watched with kindred look,  
 A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,  
 Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream  
 Induced a soft and slumbrous dream,  
 A pregnant dream, within whose shadowy  
 bounds

He recognised the earth-born Star, 20  
 And *That* which glittered from afar;  
 And (strange to witness !) from the frame  
 Of the ethereal Orb, there came  
 Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light  
 That now, when day was fled, and night  
 Hushed the dark earth, fast closing weary  
 eyes,

A very reptile could presume  
 To show her taper in the gloom,  
 As if in rivalry with One 30  
 Who sate a ruler on his throne  
 Erected in the skies.

"Exalted Star !" the Worm replied,  
 "Abate this unbecoming pride,  
 Or with a less uneasy lustre shine;  
 Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays  
 Are mastered by the breathing haze;  
 While neither mist, nor thickest cloud  
 That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,  
 Hath power to injure mine. 40"

But not for this do I aspire  
 To match the spark of local fire,  
 That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,  
 With thy acknowledged glories;—No !  
 Yet, thus upbraided, I may show  
 What favours do attend me here,  
 Till, like thyself, I disappear  
 Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,  
 Across the welkin seemed to spread 50  
 A boding sound—for aught but sleep unfit !  
 Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran;  
 That Star, so proud of late, looked wan;  
 And reeled with visionary stir  
 In the blue depth, like Lucifer  
 Cast headlong to the pit !

Fire raged: and, when the spangled floor  
 Of ancient ether was no more,  
 New heavens succeeded, by the dream  
 brought forth:

And all the happy Souls that rode  
Transfigured through that fresh abode,  
Had heretofore, in humble trust,  
Shone meekly 'mid their native dust,  
The Glow-worms of the earth !

60

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice  
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice  
Of Him who slept upon the open lea:  
Waking at morn he murmured not;  
And, till life's journey closed, the spot  
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,  
Where by that dream he had been cheered  
Beneath the shady tree.

70

## INSCRIPTIONS

SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR A  
HERMIT'S CELL.

1818. 1820

## I

HOPES, what are they ? -- Beads of morning  
Strung on slender blades of grass;  
Or a spider's web adorning  
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy ?  
Whispering harm where harm is not;  
And deluding the unwary  
Till the fatal bolt is shot !

What is glory ? -- in the socket  
See how dying tapers fare !  
What is pride ? -- a whizzing rocket  
That would emulate a star.

10

What is friendship ? -- do not trust her,  
Nor the vows which she has made;  
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre  
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth ? -- a staff rejected;  
Duty ? -- an unwelcome clog;  
Joy ? -- a moon by fits reflected  
In a swamp or watery bog;

20

Bright, as if through ether steering,  
To the Traveller's eye it shone:  
He hath hailed it re-appearing --  
And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy -- as quickly hidden,  
Or mis-shapen to the sight,

And by sullen weeds forbidden  
To resume its native light.

What is youth ? -- a dancing billow,  
(Winds behind, and rocks before !)  
Age ? -- a drooping, tottering willow  
On a flat and lazy shore.

30

What is peace ? -- when pain is over,  
And love ceases to rebel,  
Let the last faint sigh discover  
That precedes the passing knell !

## II

## INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK

The monument of ice here spoken of I observed while ascending the middle road of the three ways that lead from Rydal to Grasmere. It was on my right hand, and my eyes were upon it when it fell, as told in these lines.

PAUSE, Traveller ! whoso'er thou be  
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,  
Where silence yields reluctantly  
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,  
And fear not lest an idle sound  
Of words unsuited to the place  
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air  
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,  
Uphold a Monument as fair  
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,  
Like marble, white, like ether, pure;  
As if, beneath, some hero lay,  
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed;  
And, ever as the sun shone forth,  
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,  
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile  
Unsound as those which Fortune builds --  
To undermine with secret guile,  
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock  
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground;  
And naked left this dripping Rock,  
With shapeless ruin spread around !

## III

Where the second quarry now is, as you pass from Rydal to Grasmere, there was formerly a length of smooth rock that sloped towards the road, on the right hand. I used to call it Tadpole Slope, from having frequently observed there the water-bubbles gliding under the ice, exactly in the shape of that creature.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device ?

Such are thoughts ! -- A wind-swept meadow

Mimicking a troubled sea,  
Such is life; and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity !

## IV

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE

TROUBLED long with warring notions,  
Long impatient of thy rod,  
I resign my soul's emotions  
Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter  
Yielded by this craggy rent,  
If my spirit toss and welter  
On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant  
To consume this crystal Well;  
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,  
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,  
Would my Life present to Thee,  
Gracious God, the pure oblation  
Of divine tranquillity !

## V

Nor seldom, clad in radiant vest,  
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;  
Not seldom Evening in the west  
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,  
To the confiding Bark, untrue;  
And, if she trust the stars above,  
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread  
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,

Draws lightning down upon the head  
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,  
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;  
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word  
No change can falsify !

I bent before thy gracious throne,  
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;  
And peace was given, — nor peace alone,  
But faith sublimed to ecstasy !

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING  
OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLEN-  
DOUR AND BEAUTY

1818. 1820

Felt, and in a great measure composed upon the little mound in front of our abode at Rydal. In concluding my notices of this class of poems it may be as well to observe that among the "Miscellaneous Sonnets" are a few alluding to morning impressions which might be read with mutual benefit in connection with these "Evening Voluntaries." See, for example, that one on Westminster Bridge, that composed on a May morning, the one on the song of the Thrush, and that beginning — "While beams of orient light shoot wide and high."

## I

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 't is endued with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see —  
What is ? — ah no, but what *can* be !  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove;  
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign  
height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth be-  
low,  
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimier transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle — the  
gleam —  
The shadow — and the peace supreme !

## II

No sound is uttered, — but a deep  
 And solemn harmony pervades  
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
 And penetrates the glades.  
 Far-distant images draw nigh,  
 Called forth by wondrous potency  
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues,  
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !  
 In vision exquisitely clear,  
 Herds range along the mountain side; 30  
 And glistening antlers are descried;  
 And gilded flocks appear.  
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpleal Eve !  
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,  
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !  
 — From worlds not quickened by the sun  
 A portion of the gift is won;  
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is  
 spread  
 On ground which British shepherds tread !

## III

And, if there be whom broken ties 41  
 Afflict, or injuries assail,  
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
 Present a glorious scale,  
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
 To stop — no record hath told where !  
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,  
 And with immortal Spirits blend !  
 — Wings at my shoulders seem to play;  
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50  
 On those bright steps that heavenward raise  
 Their practicable way.  
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look  
 abroad,  
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound !  
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,  
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy  
 ground,  
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed;  
 And wake him with such gentle heed  
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower  
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour ! 60

## IV

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,  
 Where'er it wandered in the morn  
 Of blissful infancy.  
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?  
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude;

For, if a vestige of those gleams  
 Survived, 't was only in my dreams.  
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness  
 serve

No less than Nature's threatening voice, 70  
 If aught unworthy be my choice,  
 From THEE if I would swerve;  
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light  
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;  
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight  
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored;  
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
 Rejoices in a second birth !  
 — 'T is past, the visionary splendour fades;  
 And night approaches with her shades. 80

## COMPOSED DURING A STORM

1819. 1819

Written in Rydal Woods, by the side of a  
 torrent.

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul,  
 Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,  
 Went forth — his course surrendering to the  
 care  
 Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings  
 prowled  
 Insidiously, untimely thunders growl;  
 While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers,  
 tear  
 The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,  
 And shivering wolves, surprised with dark-  
 ness, howl  
 As if the sun were not. He raised his eye  
 Soul-smitten; for, that instant, did appear  
 Large space ('mid dreadful clouds) of pur-  
 est sky.  
 An azure disc — shield of Tranquillity;  
 Invisible, unlooked-for, minister  
 Of providential goodness ever nigh !

THIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOW-  
 ING, WERE SUGGESTED BY MR.  
 W. WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE  
 CAVES, ETC., IN YORKSHIRE

1819. 1819

Pure element of waters ! wheresoe'er  
 Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,  
 Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-  
 bearing plants,

Rise into life and in thy train appear:  
And, through the sunny portion of the year,  
Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursui-  
vants:

And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants;  
And hart and hind and hunter with his  
spear,

Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt  
In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign;  
And, haply, far within the marble belt  
Of central earth, where tortured Spirits  
pine

For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs  
melt

Their anguish,—and they blend sweet  
songs with thine.

## MALHAM COVE

1819. 1819

WAS the aim frustrated by force or guile,  
When giants scooped from out the rocky  
ground,

Tier under tier, this semicirque profound?  
(Giants—the same who built in Erin's isle  
That Causeway with incomparable toil!)—  
Oh, had this vast theatric structure wound  
With finished sweep into a perfect round,  
No mightier work had gained the plausible  
smile

Of all-beholding Phœbus! But, alas,  
Vain earth! false world! Foundations  
must be laid

In Heaven; for, 'mid the wreck of is and  
was,

Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic  
glass

Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

## GORDALE

1819. 1819

At early dawn, or rather when the air  
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy  
Eve

Is busiest to confer and to bereave;  
Then, pensive Votary! let thy feet repair  
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the hair  
Where the young lions couch; for so, by  
leave

Of the propitious hour, thou may'st per-  
ceive

The local Deity, with oozy hair  
And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn,

Recumbent: him thou may'st behold, who  
hides

His lineaments by day, yet there presides,  
Teaching the docile waters how to turn,  
Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,  
And force their passage to the salt-sea  
tides!

"AERIAL ROCK—WHOSE  
SOLITARY BROW"

1819. 1819

A projecting point of Loughbrigg, nearly in  
front of Rydal Mount. Thence looking at it,  
you are struck with the boldness of its aspect;  
but walking under it, you admire the beauty of  
its details. It is vulgarly called Holme-scar,  
probably from the insulated pasture by the  
waterside below it.

AERIAL Rock—whose solitary brow  
From this low threshold daily meets my  
sight,

When I step forth to hail the morning light,  
Or quit the stars with a lingering farewell  
— how

Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow?  
How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest?  
— By planting on thy naked head the crest  
Of an imperial Castle, which the plough  
Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme!  
That doth presume no more than to supply  
A grace the sinuous vale and roaring stream  
Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.  
Rise, then, ye votive Towers! and catch a  
gleam  
Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

## THE WILD DUCK'S NEST

1819. 1819

I observed this beautiful nest on the largest  
island of Rydal Water.

THE imperial Consort of the Fairy-king  
Owns not a sylvan bower; or gorgeous cell  
With emerald floored, and with purpureal  
shell

Ceilinged and roofed; that is so fair a thing  
As this low structure, for the tasks of  
Spring,

Prepared by one who loves the buoyant  
swell

Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to  
dwell;

And spreads in steadfast peace her brooding wing.  
 Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing yew-tree bough,  
 And dimly-gleaming Nest, — a hollow crown  
 Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,  
 Fine as the mother's softest plumes allow:  
 I gazed — and, self-accused while gazing,  
 sighed  
 For human-kind, weak slaves of cumbrous pride !

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF  
 IN "THE COMPLETE ANGLER"

1819. 1819

WHILE flowing rivers yield a blameless sport,  
 Shall live the name of Walton: Sage benign !  
 Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and line  
 Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort  
 To reverend watching of each still report  
 That Nature utters from her rural shrine.  
 Meek, nobly versed in simple discipline,  
 He found the longest summer day too short,  
 To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee,  
 Or down the tempting maze of Shawford brook —  
 Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book,  
 The cowslip-bank and shady willow-tree;  
 And the fresh meads — where flowed, from every nook  
 Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety !

CAPTIVITY — MARY QUEEN OF  
 SCOTS

1819. 1819

" As the cold aspect of a sunless way  
 Strikes through the Traveller's frame with  
 deadlier chill,  
 Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,  
 Glistening with unparticipated ray,  
 Or shining slope where he must never stray;  
 So joys, remembered without wish or will  
 Sharpen the keenest edge of present ill, —  
 On the crushed heart a heavier burthen lay.  
 Just Heaven, contract the compass of my  
 mind

To fit proportion with my altered state !  
 Quench those felicities whose light I find  
 Reflected in my bosom all too late ! —  
 O be my spirit, like my thralldom, strait;  
 And, like mine eyes that stream with sorrow,  
 blind !"

TO A SNOWDROP

1819. 1819

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and  
 white as they  
 But harder far, once more I see thee bend  
 Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
 Like an unbidden guest. Though day by  
 day,  
 Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops,  
 waylay  
 The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
 Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
 Whose zeal outruns his promise ! Blue-  
 eyed May  
 Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
 With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
 On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;  
 Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
 Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of  
 Spring.  
 And pensive monitor of fleeting years !

ON SEEING A TUFT OF SNOW-  
 DROPS IN A STORM

1819. 1820

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,  
 And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,  
 Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring  
 Mature release, in fair society  
 Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try;  
 Like these frail snowdrops that together  
 cling,  
 And nod their helmets, smitten by the wing  
 Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.  
 Observe the faithful flowers ! if small to  
 great  
 May lead the thoughts, thus struggling used  
 to stand  
 The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate;  
 And so the bright immortal Theban band,  
 Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's com-  
 mand,  
 Might overwhelm, but could not separate !

## TO THE RIVER DERWENT

1819. 1819

AMONG the mountains were we nursed,  
loved Stream,  
Thou near the eagle's nest — within brief  
sail,

I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,  
Where thy deep voice could lull me ! Faint  
the beam

Of human life when first allowed to gleam  
On mortal notice. — Glory of the vale,  
Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though  
frail,

Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam  
Of thy soft breath ! — Less vivid wreath  
entwined

Nemean victor's brow; less bright was  
worn,

Meed of some Roman chief — in triumph  
borne

With captives chained; and shedding from  
his car

The sunset splendours of a finished war  
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind !

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE  
VALLEYS OF WESTMORE-  
LAND, ON EASTER SUNDAY

1819. 1819

WITH each recurrence of this glorious  
morn

That saw the Saviour in his human frame  
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-  
dame

Put on fresh raiment — till that hour un-  
worn:

Domestic hands the home-bred wool had  
shorn,

And she who span it culled the daintiest  
fleece,

In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of  
Peace,

Whose temples bled beneath the platted  
thorn.

A blest estate when piety sublime  
These humble props disdained not ! O  
green dales !

Sad may I be who heard your sabbath  
chime

When Art's abused inventions were un-  
known;

Kind Nature's various wealth was all your  
own;  
And benefits were weighed in Reason's  
scales !

"GRIEF, THOU HAST LOST AN  
EVER-READY FRIEND"

1819. 1819

I could write a treatise of lamentation upon the changes brought about among the cottages of Westmoreland by the silence of the spinning-wheel. During long winter nights and wet days, the wheel upon which wool was spun gave employment to a great part of a family. The old man, however infirm, was able to card the wool, as he sate in the corner by the fire-side; and often, when a boy, have I admired the cylinders of carded wool which were softly laid upon each other by his side. Two wheels were often at work on the same floor; and others of the family, chiefly little children, were occupied in teasing and cleaning the wool to fit it for the hand of the carder. So that all, except the smallest infants, were contributing to mutual support. Such was the employment that prevailed in the pastoral vales. Where wool was not at hand, in the small rural towns, the wheel for spinning flax was almost in as constant use, if knitting was not preferred; which latter occupation has the advantage (in some cases disadvantage) that, not being of necessity stationary, it allowed of gossiping about from house to house, which good housewives reckoned an idle thing.

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever-ready friend  
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel is  
mute;

And Care — a comforter that best could  
suit

Her froward mood, and softliest reprehend;  
And Love — a charmer's voice, that used to  
lend,

More efficaciously than aught that flows  
From harp or lute, kind influence to com-  
pose

The throbbing pulse — else troubled with-  
out end:

Even Joy could tell, Joy craving truce and  
rest

From her own overflow, what power sedate  
On those revolving motions did await  
Assiduously — to soothe her aching breast;  
And, to a point of just relief, abate  
The mantling triumphs of a day too blest.

"I WATCH, AND LONG HAVE  
WATCHED, WITH CALM RE-  
GRET"

1819. 1819

Suggested in front of Rydal Mount, the rocky parapet being the summit of Loughrigg Fell opposite. Not once only, but a hundred times, have the feelings of this Sonnet been awakened by the same objects seen from the same place.

I WATCH, and long have watched, with  
calm regret  
Yon slowly-sinking star — immortal Sire  
(So might he seem) of all the glittering  
quire !  
Blue ether still surrounds him — yet — and  
yet;  
But now the horizon's rocky parapet  
Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright  
attire,  
He burns — transmuted to a dusky fire —  
Then pays submissively the appointed debt  
To the flying moments, and is seen no  
more.  
Angels and gods ! We struggle with our  
fate,  
While health, power, glory, from their  
height decline.  
Depressed; and then extinguished; and  
our state,  
In this, how different, lost Star, from thine,  
That no to-morrow shall our beams restore !

"I HEARD (ALAS ! 'T WAS ONLY  
IN A DREAM)"

1819. 1819

I HEARD (alas ! 't was only in a dream)  
Strains — which, as sage Antiquity believed,  
By waking ears have sometimes been re-  
ceived  
Wafted adown the wind from lake or  
stream;  
A most melodious requiem, a supreme  
And perfect harmony of notes, achieved  
By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,  
O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam.  
For is she not the votary of Apollo ?  
And knows she not, singing as he inspires,  
That bliss awaits her which the ungenial  
Hollow  
Of the dull earth partakes not, nor desires ?

Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal  
quires !  
She soared — and I awoke, struggling in  
vain to follow.

THE HAUNTED TREE

TO —

1819. 1820

This tree grew in the park of Rydal, and I  
have often listened to its creaking as described.

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun  
His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming  
less

To overshadow than multiply his beams  
By soft reflection — grateful to the sky,  
To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our hu-  
man sense

Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy  
More ample than the time-dismantled Oak  
Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which now,  
attired

In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords  
Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use 10  
Was fashioned; whether, by the hand of  
Art,

That eastern Sultan, amid flowers en-  
wrought

On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs  
In languor; or, by Nature, for repose  
Of panting Wood-nymph, wearied with the  
chase.

O Lady ! fairer in thy Poet's sight  
Than fairest spiritual creature of the  
groves,

Approach; — and, thus invited, crown with  
rest

The noon-tide hour: though truly some  
there are

Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid 20  
This venerable Tree; for, when the wind  
Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking  
sound

(Above the general roar of woods and  
crags)

Distinctly heard from far — a doleful note !  
As if (so Grecian shepherds would have  
deemed)

The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed  
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbeliev'd,  
By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost  
Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds of  
which



The flowery ground is conscious. But no  
wind 30  
Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;  
Not even a zephyr stirs; — the obnoxious  
Tree  
Is mute; and, in his silence, would look  
down,  
O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,  
On thy reclining form with more delight  
Than his coevals in the sheltered vale  
Seem to participate, the while they view  
Their own far-stretching arms and leafy  
heads  
Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,  
That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying  
stream ! 40

## SEPTEMBER 1819

1819. 1820

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields  
Are hung, as if with golden shields,  
Bright trophies of the sun !  
Like a fair sister of the sky,  
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,  
The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,  
Albeit uninspired by love,  
By love untaught to ring,  
May well afford to mortal ear 10  
An impulse more profoundly dear  
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat  
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat  
In nature's struggling frame,  
Some region of impatient life:  
And jealousy, and quivering strife,  
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy; — while I hear  
These vespers of another year, 20  
This hymn of thanks and praise,  
My spirit seems to mount above  
The anxieties of human love,  
And earth's precarious days.

But list ! — though winter storms be nigh,  
Unchecked is that soft harmony:  
There lives Who can provide  
For all his creatures; and in Him,  
Even like the radiant Seraphim,  
These choristers confide. 30

## UPON THE SAME OCCASION

1819. 1820

DEPARTING summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,  
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to winter chill  
The lonely redbreast pays ! 10  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,  
From social warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,  
And yellow on the bough: —  
Full, rosy garlands, from my head !  
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice;  
Wide is the range, and free the choice 20  
Of undiscordant themes;  
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
Not less than vernal ecstasies,  
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong, 10  
And they like Demi-gods are strong  
On whom the Muses smile;  
But some their function have disclaimed,  
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed  
To enervate and defile. 30

Not such the initiatory strains  
Committed to the silent plains  
In Britain's earliest dawn:  
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,  
While all-too-daringly the veil 20  
Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note  
When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
Inflamed by sense of wrong;  
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre 40  
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page  
By winged Love inscribed, to assuage  
The pangs of vain pursuit; 30

Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
With finest touch of passion swayed  
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore  
The wreck of Herculean lore, 50  
What rapture ! could ye seize  
Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll  
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
Of poesy; a bursting forth  
Of genius from the dust:  
What Horace gloried to behold,  
What Maro loved, shall we enfold ?  
Can haughty Time be just !

"THERE IS A LITTLE UNPRE-  
TENDING RILL"

1820. 1820

This Rill trickles down the hill-side into  
Windermere, near Lowwood. My sister and  
I, on our first visit together to this part of the  
country, walked from Kendal, and we rested  
to refresh ourselves by the side of the lake  
where the streamlet falls into it. This sonnet  
was written some years after in recollection of  
that happy ramble, that most happy day and  
hour.

THERE is a little unpretending Rill  
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught  
That ever among Men or Naiads sought  
Notice or name ! — It quivers down the  
hill,  
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious  
will;  
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is  
brought  
Often than Ganges or the Nile; a  
thought  
Of private recollection sweet and still !  
Months perish with their moons; year  
treads on year !  
But, faithful Emma ! thou with me canst  
say  
That, while ten thousand pleasures disap-  
pear,  
And flies their memory fast almost as  
they;  
The immortal Spirit of one happy day  
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF  
A ROCKY STREAM

1820. 1820

DOGMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white  
fur !  
Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet  
hood !  
Who, with a keenness not to be withstood,  
Press the point home, or falter and demur,  
(Checked in your course by many a teasing  
burr;  
These natural council-seats your acrid blood  
Might cool; — and, as the Genius of the  
flood  
Stoops willingly to animate and spur  
Each lighter function slumbering in the  
brain,  
You eddying balls of foam, these arrowy  
gleams  
That o'er the pavement of the surging  
streams  
Welter and flash, a synod might detain  
With subtle speculations, haply vain,  
But surely less so than your far-fetched  
themes !

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY  
(GEORGE THE THIRD)

1820. 1820

WARD of the LAW ! — dread Shadow of a  
King !  
Whose realm had dwindled to one stately  
room;  
Whose universe was gloom immersed in  
gloom,  
Darkness as thick as life o'er life could fling,  
Save haply for some feeble glimmering  
Of Faith and Hope — if thou, by nature's  
doom.  
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,  
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow  
cling,  
When thankfulness were best ? — Fresh-  
flowing tears,  
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding  
sigh,  
Yield to such after-thought the sole reply  
Which justly it can claim. The Nation  
hears  
In this deep knell, silent for threescore  
years,  
An unexampled voice of awful memory !

"THE STARS ARE MANSIONS  
BUILT BY NATURE'S HAND"

1820. 1820

THE stars are mansions built by Nature's  
hand,  
And, haply, there the spirits of the blest  
Dwell, clothed in radiance, their immortal  
vest;  
Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow strand,  
A habitation marvellously planned,  
For life to occupy in love and rest;  
All that we see — is dome, or vault, or nest,  
Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage com-  
mand.  
Glad thought for every season! but the  
Spring  
Gave it while cares were weighing on my  
heart,  
'Mid song of birds, and insects murmur-  
ing;  
And while the youthful year's prolific art —  
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower — was  
fashioning  
Abodes where self-disturbance hath no part.

## TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER

1820. 1820

With a selection from the Poems of Anne,  
Countess of Winchelsea; and extracts of similar  
character from other Writers; transcribed by  
a female friend.

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave  
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;  
And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid  
store  
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave  
The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave  
Her spotless limbs; and ventured to explore  
Dim shades — for reliques, upon Lethe's  
shore,  
Cast up at random by the sullen wave.  
To female hands the treasures were re-  
signed;  
And lo this Work! — a grotto bright and  
clear  
From stain or taint; in which thy blameless  
mind  
May feed on thoughts though pensive not  
austere;  
Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined  
To holy musing, it may enter here.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH  
FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION  
OF A CERTAIN POEM

1820. 1820

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning, "A Book  
was writ of late called 'Tetrachordon.'"

A BOOK came forth of late, called PETER  
BELL;  
Not negligent the style; — the matter? —  
good  
As aught that song records of Robin Hood;  
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish  
dell;  
But some (who brook those hackneyed  
themes full well,  
Nor heat, at 'Tam o' Shanter's name, their  
blood)  
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a harpy  
brood,  
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.  
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath  
and glen,  
Who mad'st at length the better life thy  
choice,  
Heed not such onset! nay, if praise of men  
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,  
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and rejoice  
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen!

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

1820. 1820

YE sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!  
In whose collegiate shelter England's  
Flowers  
Expand, enjoying through their vernal hours  
The air of liberty, the light of truth;  
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnaw-  
ing tooth:  
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and  
towers!  
Gardens and groves! your presence over-  
powers  
The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,  
Transformed, and rushing on a bold ex-  
change,  
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range  
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;  
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown  
The stream-like windings of that glorious  
street —  
An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown!

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

1820. 1820

SHAME on this faithless heart! that could  
 allow  
 Such transport, though but for a moment's  
 space;  
 Not while — to aid the spirit of the place —  
 The crescent moon clove with its glittering  
 prow  
 The clouds, or night-bird sang from shady  
 bough;  
 But in plain daylight: — She, too, at my  
 side,  
 Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,  
 Maintains inviolate its slightest vow!  
 Sweet Fancy! other gifts must I receive;  
 Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim;  
 Take from *her* brow the withering flowers  
 of eve,  
 And to that brow life's morning wreath  
 restore;  
 Let *her* be comprehended in the frame  
 Of these illusions, or they please no more.

JUNE 1820

1820. 1820

FAME tells of groves — from England far  
 away —  
 Groves that inspire the Nightingale to trill  
 And modulate, with subtle reach of skill  
 Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying  
 lay;  
 Such bold report I venture to gainsay:  
 For I have heard the quire of Richmond  
 hill  
 Chanting, with indefatigable bill,  
 Strains that recalled to mind a distant  
 day;  
 When, haply under shade of that same  
 wood,  
 And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars  
 Plied steadily between those willowy shores,  
 The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons  
 stood —  
 Listening, and listening long, in rapturous  
 mood,  
 Ye heavenly Birds! to your Progenitors.

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

1820. 1822

I set out in company with my Wife and Sister, and Mr. and Mrs. Monkhouse, then just married, and Miss Horrocks. These two ladies, sisters, we left at Berne, while Mr. Monkhouse took the opportunity of making an excursion with us among the Alps as far as Milan. Mr. H. C. Robinson joined us at Lucerne, and when this ramble was completed we rejoined at Geneva the two ladies we had left at Berne and proceeded to Paris, where Mr. Monkhouse and H. C. R. left us, and where we spent five weeks, of which there is not a record in these poems.

## DEDICATION

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS.,  
 TO —)

1820. 1822

DEAR Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse,  
 To You presenting these memorial Lays,  
 Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze,  
 As on a mirror that gives back the hues  
 Of living Nature; no — though free to choose  
 The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,  
 The fairest landscapes and the brightest days —  
 Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.  
 For You she wrought: Ye only can supply  
 The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides  
 In that enjoyment which with You abides,  
 Trusts to your love and vivid memory;  
 Thus far contented, that for You her verse  
 Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce!"

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, Nov. 1821.

## I

FISH-WOMEN — ON LANDING  
 AT CALAIS

1820. 1822

'T is said, fantastic ocean doth enfold  
 The likeness of whate'er on land is seen;  
 But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,  
 Above whose heads the tide so long hath  
 rolled,  
 The Dames resemble whom we here behold,  
 How fearful were it down through opening  
 waves  
 To sink, and meet them in their fretted  
 caves,  
 Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,  
 And shrill and fierce in accent! — Fear it not:

For they Earth's fairest daughters do excel;  
Pure undecaying beauty is their lot;  
Their voices into liquid music swell,  
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot,  
The undisturbed abodes where Sea-nymphs  
dwell !

II  
BRUGÈS

1820. 1822

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light  
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe of  
power:  
The splendour fled; and now the sunless  
hour,  
That, slowly making way for peaceful night,  
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight  
Offers the beauty, the magnificence,  
And sober graces, left her for defence  
Against the injuries of time, the spite  
Of fortune, and the desolating storms  
Of future war. Advance not — spare to  
hide,  
O gentle Power of darkness ! these mild  
hues;  
Obscure not yet these silent avenues  
Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms  
Of nun-like females, with soft motion,  
glide !

III  
BRUGÈS

1820. 1822

THE Spirit of Antiquity — enshrined  
In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet song,  
In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,  
And with devout solemnities entwined —  
Mounts to the seat of grace within the  
mind:  
Hence Forms that glide with swan-like ease  
along,  
Hence motions, even amid the vulgar  
throng,  
To an harmonious decency confined:  
As if the streets were consecrated ground,  
The city one vast temple, dedicate  
To mutual respect in thought and deed;  
To leisure, to forbearances sedate;  
To social cares from jarring passions freed;  
A deeper peace than that in deserts found !

IV

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF  
WATERLOO

1820. 1822

A WINGED Goddess — clothed in vesture  
wrought  
Of rainbow colours; One whose port was  
bold,  
Whose overburthened hand could scarcely  
hold  
The glittering crowns and garlands which  
it brought —  
Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.  
She vanished; leaving prospect blank and  
cold  
Of wind-swept corn that wide around us  
rolled  
In dreary billows; wood, and meagre cot,  
And monuments that soon must disappear:  
Yet a dread local recompence we found;  
While glory seemed betrayed, while patriot-  
zeal  
Sank in our hearts, we felt as men *should*  
feel  
With such vast hoards of hidden carnage  
near,  
And horror breathing from the silent  
ground !

V

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE

1820. 1822

The scenery on the Meuse pleases me more,  
upon the whole, than that of the Rhine, though  
the river itself is much inferior in grandeur.  
The rocks both in form and colour, especially  
between Namur and Liege, surpass any upon  
the Rhine, though they are in several places  
disfigured by quarries, whence stones were  
taken for the new fortifications. This is much  
to be regretted, for they are useless, and the  
scars will remain perhaps for thousands of  
years. A like injury to a still greater degree  
has been inflicted, in my memory, upon the  
beautiful rocks of Clifton on the banks of the  
Avon. There is probably in existence a very  
long letter of mine to Sir Uvedale Price, in  
which was given a description of the land-  
scapes on the Meuse as compared with those  
on the Rhine.

Details in the spirit of these sonnets are  
given both in Mrs. Wordsworth's Journals and  
my Sister's, and the re-perusal of them has

strengthened a wish long entertained that somebody would put together, as in one work, the notices contained in them, omitting particulars that were written down merely to aid our memory, and bringing the whole into as small a compass as is consistent with the general interests belonging to the scenes, circumstances, and objects touched on by each writer.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose ?

Is this the stream, whose cities, heights, and plains,

War's favourite playground, are with crimson stains

Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew's ?  
The Morn, that now, along the silver

MEUSE,

Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the swains

To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,  
Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrews

The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes  
Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,  
How sweet the prospect of you watery glade,  
With its grey rocks clustering in pensive shade —

That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise  
From the smooth meadow-ground, serene  
and still !

## VI

### AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

1820. 1822

WAS it to disenchant, and to undo,  
That we approached the Seat of Charle-  
maine ?

To sweep from many an old romantic strain  
That faith which no devotion may renew !  
Why does this puny Church present to view  
Her feeble columns ? and that scanty chair !  
This sword that one of our weak times  
might wear !

Objects of false pretence, or meanly true !  
If from a traveller's fortune I might claim  
A palpable memorial of that day,  
Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach  
That ROLAND clove with huge two-handed  
sway,

And to the enormous labour left his name,  
Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent  
bleach.

## VII

### IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE

1810. 1822

O FOR the help of Angels to complete  
This Temple — Angels governed by a plan  
Thus far pursued (how gloriously !) by  
Man,

Studious that HE might not disdain the  
seat

Who dwells in heaven ! But that aspiring  
heat

Hath failed; and now, ye Powers ! whose  
gorgeous wings

And splendid aspect you emblazonings  
But faintly picture, 't were an office meet  
For you, on these unfinished shafts to try  
The midnight virtues of your harmony : —  
This vast design might tempt you to re-  
peat

Strains that call forth upon empyreal  
ground

Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound  
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet !

## VIII

### IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE

1820. 1822

AMID this dance of objects sadness steals  
O'er the defrauded heart — while sweeping  
by,

As in a fit of Thespian jollity,  
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green  
Earth reels :

Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels  
The venerable pageantry of Time,  
Each beetling rampart, and each tower  
sublime,

And what the Dell unwillingly reveals  
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees es-  
pied

Near the bright River's edge. Yet why  
repine ?

To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze —  
Such sweet wayfaring — of life's spring  
the pride,

Her summer's faithful joy — *that* still is  
mine,

And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

IX  
HYMN

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH  
THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF  
HEIDELBERG

1820. 1822

JESU! bless our slender Boat,  
By the current swept along;  
Loud its threatenings — let them not  
Drown the music of a song  
Breathed thy mercy to implore,  
Where these troubled waters roar!

Saviour, for our warning, seen  
Bleeding on that precious Rood;  
If, while through the meadows green  
Gently wound the peaceful flood,  
We forgot Thee, do not Thou  
Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like yon ancient Tower  
Watching o'er the River's bed,  
Fling the shadow of thy power,  
Else we sleep among the dead;  
Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,  
Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;  
Through the rocks our passage smooth;  
Where the whirlpool frets and raves  
Let thy love its anger soothe:  
All our hope is placed in Thee;  
*Miserere Domine!*

X  
THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE

1820. 1822

NOT, like his great Compeers, indignantly  
Doth DANUBE spring to life! The wan-  
dering Stream  
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's  
gleam  
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee  
Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy,  
free  
To follow in his track of silver light,  
Mounts on rapt wing, and with a moment's  
flight  
Hath reached the encincture of that gloomy  
sea

Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbade to  
meet  
In conflict; whose rough winds forgot their  
jars  
To waft the heroic progeny of Greece;  
When the first Ship sailed for the Golden  
Fleece —  
ARGO — exalted for that daring feat  
To fix in heaven her shape distinct with  
stars.

XI  
ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-  
BACH, LAUTERBRUNNEN

1820. 1822

UTTERED by whom, or how inspired — de-  
signed  
For what strange service, does this concert  
reach  
Our ears, and near the dwellings of man-  
kind!  
'Mid fields familiarized to human speech? —  
No Mermaid's warble — to allay the wind  
Driving some vessel toward a dangerous  
beach —  
More thrilling melodies; Witch answering  
Witch,  
To chant a love-spell, never intertwined  
Notes shrill and wild with art more musi-  
cal:  
Alas! that from the lips of abject Want  
Or Idleness in tatters mendicant  
The strain should flow — free Fancy to en-  
thral,  
And with regret and useless pity haunt  
This bold, this bright, this sky-born,  
WATERFALL!

XII  
THE FALL OF THE AAR —  
HANDEC

1820. 1822

FROM the fierce aspect of this River, throw-  
ing  
His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,  
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:  
But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,  
Flowers we espy beside the torrent grow-  
ing;

Flowers that peep forth from many a cleft  
 and chink,  
 And, from the whirlwind of his anger,  
 drink  
 Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:  
 They suck — from breath that, threatening  
 to destroy,  
 Is more benignant than the dewy eve —  
 Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:  
 Nor doubt but He to whom yon Pine-trees  
 nod  
 Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's  
 God,  
 These humbler adorations will receive.

## XII

## MEMORIAL

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF  
 THUN

"*DEM  
 ANDENKEN  
 MEINES FREUNDES  
 ALOYS REDING  
 MDCCCXVIII*"

1820. 1822

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was  
 Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which,  
 with a courage and perseverance worthy of  
 the cause, opposed the flagitious and too suc-  
 cessful attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate  
 their country.

AROUND a wild and woody hill  
 A gravelled pathway treading,  
 We reached a votive Stone that bears  
 The name of Aloys Reding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it  
 there  
 For silence and protection;  
 And haply with a finer care  
 Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West;  
 And, while in summer glory  
 He sets, his sinking yields a type  
 Of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss  
 Amid the grove to linger;  
 Till all is dim, save this bright Stone  
 Touched by his golden finger.

## XIV

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE  
 CATHOLIC CANTONS

1820. 1822

DOOMED as we are our native dust  
 To wet with many a bitter shower,  
 It ill befits us to disdain  
 The altar, to deride the fane,  
 Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust  
 To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,  
 Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:  
 Hail to the firm unmoving cross,  
 Aloft, where pines their branches toss!  
 And to the chapel far withdrawn,  
 That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam — along the brink  
 Of Rhine — or by the sweeping Po,  
 Through Alpine vale, or champion wide,  
 Whate'er we look on, at our side  
 Be Charity! — to bid us think,  
 And feel, if we would know.

## XV

## AFTER-THOUGHT

1820. 1822

O LIFE! without thy chequered scene  
 Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,  
 Success and failure, could a ground  
 For magnanimity be found;  
 For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?  
 Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach —  
 Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;  
 Heaven upon earth 's an empty boast;  
 But, for the bowers of Eden lost,  
 Mercy has placed within our reach  
 A portion of God's peace.

## XVI

SCENE ON THE LAKE OF  
 BRIENTZ

1820. 1822

"WHAT know we of the Blest above  
 But that they sing and that they love?"



Yet, if they ever did inspire  
 A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,  
 Now, where those harvest Damsels float  
 Homeward in their rugged Boat,  
 (While all the ruffling winds are fled —  
 Each slumbering on some mountain's head)  
 Now, surely, hath that gracious aid  
 Been felt, that influence is displayed.  
 Pupils of Heaven, in order stand  
 The rustic Maidens, every hand  
 Upon a Sister's shoulder laid, —  
 To chant, as glides the boat along,  
 A simple, but a touching, song;  
 To chant, as Angels do above,  
 The melodies of Peace in love !

## XVII

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF  
ANGELS

1820. 1822

For gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes  
 The work of Fancy from her willing hands;  
 And such a beautiful creation makes  
 As renders needless spells and magic wands,  
 And for the boldest tale belief commands.  
 When first mine eyes beheld that famous Hill,  
 The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,  
 With intermingling motions soft and still,  
 Hung round its top, on wings that changed  
 their hues at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants; they were  
 The very Angels whose authentic lays,  
 Sung from that heavenly ground in middle  
 air,

Made known the spot where piety should  
 raise

A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.  
 Resplendent Apparition ! if in vain  
 My ears did listen, 't was enough to gaze;  
 And watch the slow departure of the train,  
 Whose skirts the glowing Mountain thirsted  
 to detain.

## XVIII

## OUR LADY OF THE SNOW

1820. 1822

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign  
 Than fairest Star, upon the height  
 Of thy own mountain, set to keep  
 Lone vigils through the hours of sleep,

What eye can look upon thy shrine  
 Untroubled at the sight ?

These crowded offerings as they hang  
 In sign of misery relieved,  
 Even these, without intent of theirs,  
 Report of comfortless despairs, 10  
 Of many a deep and cureless pang  
 And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this aerial cleft,  
 As to a common centre, tend  
 All sufferers that no more rely  
 On mortal succour — all who sigh  
 And pine, of human hope bereft,  
 Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild !  
 Though plenteous flowers around thee blow  
 Not only from the dreary strife 20  
 Of Winter, but the storms of life,  
 Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,  
 OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

Even for the Man who stops not here,  
 But down the irriguous valley hies,  
 Thy very name, O Lady ! flings,  
 O'er blooming fields and gushing springs,  
 A tender sense of shadowy fear,  
 And chastening sympathies ! 30

Nor falls that intermingling shade  
 To summer-gladsomeness unkind:  
 It chastens only to requite  
 With gleams of fresher, purer, light;  
 While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,  
 More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on ! — a tempting downward way,  
 A verdant path before us lies;  
 Clear shines the glorious sun above;  
 Then give free course to joy and love, 40  
 Deeming the evil of the day  
 Sufficient for the wise.

## XIX

## EFFUSION

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER  
 OF TELL, AT ALTORF

1820. 1822

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew  
 the Linden Tree against which his Son is said

to have been placed, when the Father's archery was put to proof under circumstances so famous in Swiss Story.

WHAT though the Italian pencil wrought not here,  
Nor such fine skill as did the need bestow  
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear  
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,  
While narrow cares their limits overflow.  
Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, warriors  
old,  
Infants in arms, and ye, that as ye go  
Homeward or schoolward, ape what ye  
behold !  
Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy  
bold !

And when that calm Spectatress from on  
high  
Looks down — the bright and solitary Moon,  
Who never gazes but to beautify;  
And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of  
noon  
Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune  
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls;  
Then might the passing Monk receive a boon  
Of saintly pleasure from these pictured  
walls,  
While, on the warlike groups, the mellow-  
ing lustre falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials  
come  
Yield not to terror or despondency,  
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal  
doom,  
Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while he  
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree:  
He quakes not like the timid forest game,  
But smiles — the hesitating shaft to free;  
Assured that Heaven its justice will pro-  
claim,  
And to his Father give its own unerring aim.

## XX

## THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ

1820. 1822

By antique Fancy trimmed — though lowly,  
bred  
To dignity — in thee, O SCHWYTZ ! are seen  
The genuine features of the golden mean;  
Equality by Prudence governed,

Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead;  
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace,  
serene  
As that of the sweet fields and meadows  
green  
In unambitious compass round thee spread.  
Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian  
steep,  
Holding a central station of command,  
Might well be styled this noble body's  
HEAD;  
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrench-  
ments deep,  
Its HEART; and ever may the heroic Land  
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom  
keep !

## XXI

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES  
VACHES" ON THE TOP OF THE  
PASS OF ST. GOTHARD

1820. 1822

I LISTEN — but no faculty of mine  
Avails those modulations to detect,  
Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss  
affect  
With tenderest passion; leaving him to pine  
(So fame reports) and die, — his sweet-  
breathed kine  
Remembering, and green Alpine pastures  
decked  
With vernal flowers. Yet may we not re-  
ject  
The tale as fabulous. — Here while I re-  
cline,  
Mindful how others by this simple Strain  
Are moved, for me — upon this Mountain  
named  
Of God himself from dread pre-eminence —  
Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,  
Yield to the Music's touching influence;  
And joys of distant home my heart enchain.

## XXII

## FORT FUENTES

1820. 1822

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of  
a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at  
the head of the Lake of Como, commanding  
views up the Valteline, and toward the town of  
Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direc-

tion is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We rejoiced at being favoured with a distinct view of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary — scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been entered by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third; and the Chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his Descendants. Marble pillars of gateways are yet standing, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls: a smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins were some ill tended, but growing willingly; and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink was growing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden!" — Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years. — *Extract from Journal.*

DREAD hour! when, upheaved by war's  
sulphurous blast,

This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian  
stone

So far from the holy enclosure was cast,

To couch in this thicket of brambles  
alone,

To rest where the lizard may bask in the  
palm

Of his half-open hand pure from blemish  
or speck;

And the green, gilded snake, without trou-  
bling the calm

Of the beautiful countenance, twine  
round his neck;

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)

When winter the grove of its mantle  
bereaves,

Some bird (like our own honoured red-  
breast) may strew

The desolate Slumberer with moss and  
with leaves.

FUENTES once harboured the good and the  
brave,

Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure  
unknown;

Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave  
While the thrill of her fifes thro' the  
mountains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless  
ascent; —

O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway,  
When the whirlwind of human destruction  
is spent,

Our tumults appeased, and our strifes  
passed away!

### XXIII

#### THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR

SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO

1820. 1822

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2000 feet, and on one side nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sealike extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps — unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

THOU sacred Pile! whose turrets rise  
From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,  
Guarded by lone San Salvador;  
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,  
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,  
But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned  
To rest the universal Lord:

Why leap the fountains from their cells  
Where everlasting Bounty dwells? — 10  
That, while the Creature is sustained,  
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times —  
Let all remind the soul of heaven;  
Our slack devotion needs them all;  
And Faith — so oft of sense the thrall,  
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs —  
May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,  
And all the Poms of this frail "spot" 20  
Which men call Earth," have yearned to seek,  
Associate with the simply meek,  
Religion in the sainted grove,  
And in the hallowed grove.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,  
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,  
Did mighty Tell repair of old —  
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,  
Deliverer of the stedfast rocks  
And of the ancient hills! 30

He, too, of battle-martyrs chief!  
Who, to recall his daunted peers,  
For victory shaped an open space,  
By gathering with a wide embrace,  
Into his single breast, a sheaf  
Of fatal Austrian spears.

## XXIV

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT AND  
THE SWISS GOATHERD

1820. 1822

## PART I

## I

Now that the farewell tear is dried,  
Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide,  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!  
Whether for London bound — to trill  
Thy mountain notes with simple skill;  
Or on thy head to poise a show  
Of Images in seemly row;  
The graceful form of milk-white Steed,  
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede;  
Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear 10  
The sightless Milton, with his hair  
Around his placid temples curled;

And Shakspeare at his side — a freight,  
If clay could think and mind were weight,  
For him who bore the world!  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!

## II

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free  
Though serving sage philosophy) 20  
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,  
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,  
Whose sentient tube instructs to time  
A purpose to a fickle clime:  
Whether thou choose this useful part,  
Or minister to finer art,  
Though robbed of many a cherished dream,  
And crossed by many a shattered scheme,  
What stirring wonders wilt thou see  
In the proud Isle of liberty! 30  
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine  
With thoughts which no delights can chase,  
Recall a Sister's last embrace,  
His Mother's neck entwine;  
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy  
That *would* have loved the bright-haired  
Boy!

## III

My Song, encouraged by the grace  
That beams from his ingenuous face,  
For this Adventurer scruples not  
To prophesy a golden lot; 40  
Due recompence, and safe return  
To Como's steeps — his happy bourne!  
Where he, aloft in garden glade,  
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,  
The towering maize, and prop the twig  
That ill supports the luscious fig;  
Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof  
With purple of the trellis-roof,  
That through the jealous leaves escapes  
From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes. 50  
— Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child  
To share his wanderings! him whose look  
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,  
So touchingly he smiled —  
As with a rapture caught from heaven —  
For unasked alms in pity given.

## PART II

## I

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest  
Like foresters in leaf-green vest,  
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground

For Tell's dread archery renowned,  
 Before the target stood — to claim  
 The guerdon of the steadiest aim.  
 Loud was the rifle-gun's report —  
 A startling thunder quick and short !  
 But, flying through the heights around,  
 Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound  
 Of hearts and hands alike "prepared  
 The treasures they enjoy to guard !"  
 And, if there be a favoured hour  
 When Heroes are allowed to quit  
 The tomb, and on the clouds to sit  
 With tutelary power,  
 On their Descendants shedding grace —  
 This was the hour, and that the place.

## II

But Truth inspired the Bards of old  
 When of an iron age they told,  
 Which to unequal laws gave birth,  
 And drove Astræa from the earth.  
 — A gentle Boy (perchance with blood  
 As noble as the best endued,  
 But seemingly a Thing despised;  
 Even by the sun and air unprized;  
 For not a tinge or flowery streak  
 Appeared upon his tender cheek)  
 Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes,  
 Apart, beside his silent goats,  
 Sate watching in a forest shed,  
 Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head;  
 Mute as the snow upon the hill,  
 And, as the saint he prays to, still.  
 Ah, what avails heroic deed ?  
 What liberty ? if no defence  
 Be won for feeble Innocence.  
 Father of all ! though wilful Manhood read  
 His punishment in soul-distress,  
 Grant to the morn of life its natural blessed-  
 ness !

## XXV

## THE LAST SUPPER

BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE REFEC-  
 TORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA  
 DELLA GRAZIA — MILAN

1820. 1822

Tho' searching damps and many an envi-  
 ous flaw  
 Have marred this Work; the calm ethereal  
 grace,

The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,  
 The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe  
 The Elements; as they do melt and thaw  
 The heart of the Beholder — and erase  
 (At least for one rapt moment) every trace  
 Of disobedience to the primal law.  
 The annunciation of the dreadful truth  
 Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, fore-  
 head, cheek,  
 And hand reposing on the board in ruth  
 Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek  
 Unquestionable meanings — still bespeak  
 A labour worthy of eternal youth !

## XXVI

## THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1820

1820. 1822

HIGH on her speculative tower  
 Stood Science waiting for the hour  
 When Sol was destined to endure  
 That darkening of his radiant face  
 Which Superstition strove to chase,  
 Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,  
 Through regions fair as Paradise  
 We gaily passed, — till Nature wrought  
 A silent and unlooked-for change,  
 That checked the desultory range  
 Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,  
 The waves danced round us as before,  
 As lightly, though of altered hue,  
 'Mid recent coolness, such as falls  
 At noontide from umbrageous walls  
 That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud  
 Cast far or near a murky shroud;  
 The sky an azure field displayed;  
 'T was sunlight sheathed and gently  
 charmed,  
 Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,  
 And as in slumber laid, —

Or something night and day between,  
 Like moonshine — but the hue was green;  
 Still moonshine, without shadow, spread  
 On jutting rock, and curvèd shore,  
 Where gazed the peasant from his door  
 And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps — it lay,  
Lugano ! on thy ample bay;  
The solemnizing veil was drawn  
O'er villas, terraces, and towers;  
To Albogasio's olive bowers,  
Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire  
Hath passed to Milan's loftiest spire,  
And there alights 'mid that aerial host  
Of Figures human and divine,  
White as the snows of Apennine  
Indurated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array  
That guards the Temple night and day;  
Angels she sees — that night from heaven  
have flown,

And Virgin-saints, who not in vain  
Have striven by purity to gain  
The beatific crown —

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings  
Each narrowing above each; — the wings, 50  
The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips,  
The starry zone of sovereign height —  
All steeped in this portentous light !  
All suffering dim eclipse !

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught  
These perishable spheres have wrought  
May with that issue be compared)  
Throngs of celestial visages,  
Darkening like water in the breeze,  
A holy sadness shared.

Lo ! while I speak, the labouring Sun  
His glad deliverance has begun:  
The cypress waves her sombre plume  
More cheerily; and town and tower,  
The vineyard and the olive-bower,  
Their lustre re-assume !

O Ye, who guard and grace my home  
While in far-distant lands we roam,  
What countenance hath this Day put on for  
you ?  
While we looked round with favoured eyes,  
Did sullen mists hide lake and skies  
And mountains from your view ?

Or was it given you to behold  
Like vision, pensive though not cold,  
From the smooth breast of gay Winander-  
mere ?

Saw ye the soft yet awful veil  
Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,  
Helvellyn's brow severe ?

I ask in vain — and know far less  
If sickness, sorrow, or distress 80  
Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;  
Sad blindness ! but ordained to prove  
Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love  
And all-controlling power.

## XXVII

## THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS

1820. 1822

## I

How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free  
From Love's uneasy sovereignty —  
Beats with a fancy running high,  
Her simple cares to magnify;  
Whom Labour, never urged to toil,  
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;  
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;  
Whose heaviest sin it is to look  
Askance upon her pretty Self  
Reflected in some crystal brook; 10  
Whom grief hath spared — who sheds no  
tear

But in sweet pity; and can hear  
Another's praise from envy clear.

## II

Such (but O lavish Nature ! why  
That dark unfathomable eye,  
Where lurks a Spirit that replies  
To stillest mood of softest skies,  
Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,  
Another's first, and then her own ?)  
Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid, 20  
Our Lady's laggard Votaress,  
Halting beneath the chestnut shade  
To accomplish there her loveliness:  
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;  
A Sister serves with slacker hand;  
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the  
festal band.

## III

How blest (if truth may entertain  
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)  
The HELVETIAN Girl — who daily braves,  
In her light skiff, the tossing waves, 30  
And quits the bosom of the deep

Only to climb the rugged steep !  
 — Say whence that modulated shout !  
 From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng ?  
 Or does the greeting to a rout  
 Of giddy Bacchanals belong ?  
 Jubilant outcry ! rock and glade  
 Resounded — but the voice obeyed  
 The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

## IV

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood ; 40  
 Her courage animates the flood ;  
 Her steps the elastic greensward meets  
 Returning reluctant sweets ;  
 The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice  
 Aloud, saluted by her voice !  
 Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,  
 Be as thou art — for through thy veins  
 The blood of Heroes runs its race !  
 And nobly wilt thou brook the chains  
 That, for the virtuous, Life prepares ; 50  
 The fetters which the Matron wears ;  
 The patriot Mother's weight of anxious  
 cares !

## V

"Sweet HIGHLAND Girl ! a very shower  
 Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"  
 When thou didst flit before mine eyes,  
 Gay Vision under sullen skies,  
 While Hope and Love around thee played,  
 Near the rough falls of Inversneyd !  
 Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen  
 No breach of promise in the fruit ? 60  
 Was joy, in following joy, as keen  
 As grief can be in grief's pursuit ?  
 When youth had flown did hope still bless  
 Thy goings — or the cheerfulness  
 Of innocence survive to mitigate distress ?

## VI

But from our course why turn — to tread  
 A way with shadows overspread ;  
 Where what we gladliest would believe  
 Is feared as what may most deceive ?  
 Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned  
 But heath-bells from thy native ground, 71  
 Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,  
 Nor take one ray of light from Thee ;  
 For in my Faery thou dost share  
 The gift of immortality ;  
 And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,  
 The Votress by Lugano's side ;  
 And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep  
 deserted !

## XXVIII

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY  
 BUONAPARTE FOR A TRI-  
 UMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN,  
 NOW LYING BY THE WAY-SIDE  
 IN THE SIMPLON PASS

1820. 1822

AMBITION — following down this far-famed  
 slope

Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,  
 While clarions prate of kingdoms to be  
 won —

Perchance, in future ages, here may stop ;  
 Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope  
 By admonition from this prostrate Stone !  
 Memento uninscribed of Pride o'erthrown ;  
 Vanity's hieroglyphic ; a choice trope  
 In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the  
 Rock,

Rest where thy course was stayed by Power  
 divine !

The Soul transported sees, from hint of  
 thine,

Crimes which the great Avenger's hand pro-  
 voke,

Hears combats whistling o'er the ensan-  
 guined heath :

What groans ! what shrieks ! what quiet-  
 ness in death.

## XXIX

## STANZAS

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS

1820. 1822

VALLOMBROSA ! I longed in thy shadiest  
 wood

To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered  
 floor,

To listen to ANIO's precipitous flood,  
 When the stillness of evening hath deep-  
 ened its roar ;

To range through the Temples of PÆSTUM,  
 to muse

In POMPEII preserved by her burial in  
 earth ;

On pictures to gaze where they drank in  
 their hues ;

And murmur sweet songs on the ground of  
 their birth.

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of  
Rome,  
Could I leave them unseen, and not yield to  
regret?<sup>10</sup>  
With a hope (and no more) for a season to  
come,  
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent  
debt?

Thou fortunate Region! whose Greatness  
inured

Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;  
Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I turned  
From your infinite marvels, the sadness  
was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois  
retires

From dew-sprinkled grass to heights  
guarded with snow,

Toward the mists that hang over the land  
of my Sires,<sup>19</sup>

From the climate of myrtles contented I go.  
My thoughts become bright like yon edg-  
ing of Pines

On the steep's lofty verge: how it blackened  
the air!

But, touched from behind by the Sun, it  
now shines

With threads that seem part of his own  
silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear  
Friends we divide,

Though by the same zephyr our temples be  
fanned

As we rest in the cool orange-bower side  
by side,

A yearning survives which few hearts shall  
withstand:

Each step hath its value while homeward  
we move;—<sup>20</sup>

O joy when the girdle of England appears!  
What moment in life is so conscious of love,  
Of love in the heart made more happy by  
tears?

## XXX

## ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI

1820. 1822

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from the  
cover?

Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,  
As multitudinous a harmony

Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos  
over,

When, from the soft couch of her sleeping  
 Lover,

Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the moun-  
tain dew

In keen pursuit — and gave, where'er she  
flew,

Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.

A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on

Through the bleak concave, wakes this  
wondrous chime

Of æry voices locked in unison, —

Faint — far-off — near — deep — solemn  
and sublime! —

So, from the body of one guilty deed,

A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting  
thoughts, proceed!

## XXXI

## PROCESSIONS

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN  
THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY

1820. 1822

To appease the Gods; or public thanks to  
yield;

Or to solicit knowledge of events,

Which in her breast Futurity concealed;

And that the past might have its true  
intents

Feelingly told by living monuments —

Mankind of yore were prompted to devise

Rites such as yet Persepolis presents

Graven on her cankered walls, solemnities

That moved in long array before admiring  
eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful state  
Thick boughs of palm, and willows from  
the brook,<sup>11</sup>

Marched round the altar — to commemo-  
rate

How, when their course they through the  
desert took,

Guided by signs which ne'er the sky for-  
sook,

They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low;

Green boughs were borne, while, for the  
blast that shook

Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,

Shouts rise, and storms of sound from  
lifted trumpets blow!



And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove  
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells, 20  
The priests and damsels of Ammonian Jove  
Provoked responses with shrill canticles;  
While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,  
They round his altar bore the horned God,  
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells  
Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,  
When universal sea the mountains over-  
flowed.

Why speak of Roman Poms ? the haughty  
claims  
Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars;  
The feast of Neptune — and the Cereal  
Games, 30  
With images, and crowns, and empty cars;  
The dancing Salii — on the shields of Mars  
Smiting with fury; and a deeper dread  
Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars  
Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head  
Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted !

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft  
Appeared — to govern Christian pageant-  
ries:  
The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft  
Moved to the chant of sober litanies. 40  
Even such, this day, came wafted on the  
breeze  
From a long train — in hooded vestments  
fair  
Enwrapt — and winding, between Alpine  
trees  
Spiry and dark, around their House of  
prayer,  
Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,  
The pageant haunts me as it met our  
eyes !  
Still, with those white-robed Shapes — a  
living Stream,  
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise  
For the same service, by mysterious ties; 50  
Numbers exceeding credible account  
Of number, pure and silent Votaries  
Issuing or issued from a wintry fount;  
The impenetrable heart of that exalted  
Mount !

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam  
While they the Church engird with motion  
slow,  
A product of that awful Mountain seem,

Poured from his vaults of everlasting  
snow;  
Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,  
Not swans descending with the stealthy  
tide, 60  
A livelier sisterly resemblance show  
Than the fair Forms, that in long order  
glide,  
Bear to the glacier band — those Shapes  
aloft descried.  
Trembling, I look upon the secret springs  
Of that licentious craving in the mind  
To act the God among external things,  
To bind, on apt suggestion, or unbind;  
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined  
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,  
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned; 70  
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou  
miss,  
Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's  
dark abyss !

## XXXII

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

1820. 1822

The lamented Youth whose untimely death  
gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Fred-  
erick William Goddard, from Boston in North  
America. He was in his twentieth year, and  
had resided for some time with a clergyman in  
the neighbourhood of Geneva for the completion  
of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-  
pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out  
on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to  
fall in with a Friend of mine who was hasten-  
ing to join our party. The travellers, after  
spending a day together on the road from  
Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other  
at night, the young men having intended to  
proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the  
morning my friend found his new acquaint-  
ances, who were informed of the object of his  
journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of,  
equipped to accompany him. We met at  
Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G.  
and his fellow-student became in consequence  
our travelling companions for a couple of days.  
We ascended the Righi together; and, after  
contemplating the sunrise from that noble  
mountain, we separated at an hour and on a  
spot well suited to the parting of those who  
were to meet no more. Our party descended  
through the valley of our Lady of the Snow,  
and our late companions, to Art. We had  
hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but

on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the Church of Küssnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,  
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,  
From the dread summit of the Queen  
Of mountains, through a deep ravine,  
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells  
"Our Lady of the Snow."

The sky was blue, the air was mild;  
Free were the streams and green the  
bowers;

As if, to rough assaults unknown,  
The genial spot had *ever* shown  
A countenance that as sweetly smiled —  
The face of summer-hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease;  
With pleasure dancing through the frame  
We journeyed; all we knew of care —  
Our path that straggled here and there;  
Of trouble — but the fluttering breeze;  
Of Winter — but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil  
Of three short days — but hush — no more!  
Calm is the grave, and calmer none  
Than that to which thy cares are gone,  
Thou Victim of the stormy gale;  
Asleep on ZÜRICH's shore!

O GODDARD! what art thou? — a name —  
A sunbeam followed by a shade!  
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,  
The great, the experienced, and the wise:  
Too much from this frail earth we claim,  
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,  
Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,

Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,  
A sea-green river, proud to lave,  
With current swift and undefiled,  
The towers of old LUCERNE.

We parted upon solemn ground  
Far-lifted towards the unfading sky;  
But all our thoughts were *then* of Earth,  
That gives to common pleasures birth;  
And nothing in our hearts we found  
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathising Powers of air,  
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,  
Herbs, moistened by Virginian dew,  
A most untimely grave to strew,  
Whose turf may never know the care  
Of *kindred* human hands!

Beloved by every gentle Muse  
He left his Transatlantic home:  
Europe, a realised romance,  
Had opened on his eager glance;  
What present bliss! — what golden views!  
What stores for years to come!

Though lodged within no vigorous frame,  
His soul her daily tasks renewed,  
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings  
High poised — or as the wren that sings  
In shady places, to proclaim  
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain in sadly-uttered praise;  
The words of truth's memorial vow  
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed  
From flowers 'mid GOLDAU's ruins bred;  
As evening's fondly-lingering rays,  
On RIGHI's silent brow.

Lamented Youth! to thy cold clay  
Fit obsequies the Stranger paid;  
And piety shall guard the Stone  
Which hath not left the spot unknown  
Where the wild waves resigned their  
prey —  
And *that* which marks thy bed.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,  
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;  
This tribute from a casual Friend  
A not unwelcome aid may lend,  
To feed the tender luxury,  
The rising pang to smother.

## XXXIII

SKY-PROSPECT — FROM THE  
PLAIN OF FRANCE

1820. 1822

Lo ! in the burning west, the craggy nape  
Of a proud Ararat ! and, thereupon,  
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done !  
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape ;  
There, combats a huge crocodile — agape  
A golden spear to swallow ! and that brown  
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,  
Stirs and recedes — destruction to escape !  
Yet all is harmless — as the Elysian shades  
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose —  
Silently disappears, or quickly fades :  
Meek Nature's evening comment on the  
shows

That for oblivion take their daily birth  
From all the fuming vanities of Earth !

## XXXIV

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR  
THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE

1820. 1822

WHY cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,  
Ye furious waves ! a patriotic Son  
Of England — who in hope her coast had  
won,  
His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er ?  
Well — let him pace this noted beach once  
more,  
That gave the Roman his triumphal shells ;  
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells  
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Conqueror ! —  
Enough : my Country's cliffs I can behold,  
And proudly think, beside the chafing sea,  
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,  
And folly cursed with endless memory :  
These local recollections ne'er can cloy ;  
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy !

## XXXV

AFTER LANDING — THE VAL-  
LEY OF DOVER

Nov. 1820

1820. 1822

WHERE be the noisy followers of the game  
Where faction breeds ; the turmoil where ?  
that passed

Through Europe, echoing from the news-  
man's blast,  
And filled our hearts with grief for Eng-  
land's shame.

Peace greets us ; — rambling on without an  
aim

We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To ruminate, couched on the grassy lea ;  
And hear far-off the mellow horn pro-  
claim

The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder  
sound

Stirs not ; enrapt I gaze with strange de-  
light,

While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,  
Here only serve a feeling to invite  
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,  
And makes this rural stillness more pro-  
found.

## XXXVI

## AT DOVER

1820. 1822

For the impressions on which this sonnet  
turns, I am indebted to the experience of my  
daughter, during her residence at Dover with  
our dear friend, Miss Fenwick.

From the Pier's head, musing, and with  
increase

Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side  
Town,

Under the white cliff's battlemented crown,  
Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath  
peace :

The streets and quays are thronged, but  
why disown

Their natural utterance : whence this  
strange release

From social noise — silence elsewhere un-  
known ? —

A Spirit whispered, " Let all wonder  
cease ;

Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have set  
free

Thy sense from pressure of life's common  
din ;

As the dread Voice that speaks from out  
the sea

Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of Time  
Doth deaden, shocks of tumult, shrieks of  
crime,

The shouts of folly, and the groans of sin."

## XXXVII

## DESULTORY STANZAS

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING  
SHEETS FROM THE PRESS

1820. 1822

Is then the final page before me spread,  
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?  
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be read,  
How can I give thee licence to depart?  
One tribute more: unbidden feelings start  
Forth from their coverts; slighted objects  
rise;

My spirit is the scene of such wild art  
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,  
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

All that I saw returns upon my view, 10  
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,  
All that I felt this moment doth renew;  
And where the foot with no unmanly fear  
Recoiled — and wings alone could travel —  
there

I move at ease; and meet contending  
themes

That press upon me, crossing the career  
Of recollections vivid as the dreams  
Of midnight, — cities, plains, forests, and  
mighty streams.

Where Mortal never breathed I dare to sit  
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew, 20  
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power! —  
and yet

What are they but a wreck and residue,  
Whose only business is to perish? — true  
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons  
of Time

Labour their proper greatness to subdue;  
Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime  
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude  
sublime.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge  
Across thy long deep Valley, furious Rhone!  
Arch that *here* rests upon the granite ridge  
Of Monte Rosa — *there* on frailer stone 31  
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;  
And, from that arch, down-looking on the  
Vale

The aspect I behold of every zone;  
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,  
Blythe Autumn's purple crown, and Win-  
ter's icy mail!

Far as ST. MAURICE, from yon eastern  
Forks,

Down the main avenue my sight can range:  
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks  
Within them, church, and town, and hut,  
and grange, 40

For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;  
Snows, torrents; — to the region's utmost  
bound,

Life, Death, in amicable interchange; —  
But list! the avalanche — the hush pro-  
found

That follows — yet more awful than that  
awful sound!

Is not the chamois suited to his place?

The eagle worthy of her ancestry?

— Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall Ye dis-  
grace

Your noble birthright, ye that occupy  
Your council-seats beneath the open sky, 50  
On Sarnen's Mount, there judge of fit and  
right,

In simple democratic majesty;  
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows —  
the might

And purity of nature spread before your  
sight!

From this appropriate Court, renowned  
LUCERNE

Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge —  
that cheers

The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and  
stern,

An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.

Like portraiture, from loftier source, en-  
dears

That work of kindred frame, which spans  
the lake 60

Just at the point of issue, where it fears  
The form and motion of a stream to take;  
Where it begins to stir, *yet* voiceless as a  
snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral  
rolled,

This long-roofed Vista penetrate — but see,  
One after one, its tablets, that unfold

The whole design of Scripture history;

From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,

Till the bright Star appeared in eastern skies,

Announcing, ONE was born mankind to free;

His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice; 71

Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings  
kill.

— Long may these homely Works devised  
of old,

These simple efforts of Helvetian skill,  
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold  
The State, — the Country's destiny to  
mould;

Turning, for them who pass, the common  
dust

Of servile opportunity to gold;

Filling the soul with sentiments august —

The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the  
just !

81

No more; Time halts not in his noiseless  
march —

Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid  
flood;

Life slips from underneath us, like that arch  
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,  
Earth stretched below, heaven in our neigh-  
bourhood.

Go forth, my little Book ! pursue thy way;  
Go forth, and please the gentle and the  
good;

Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say  
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace  
some future Lay.

90

## THE RIVER DUDDON

### A SERIES OF SONNETS

1820. 1820

It is with the little river Duddon as it is with most other rivers, Ganges and Nile not excepted, — many springs might claim the honour of being its head. In my own fancy I have fixed its rise near the noted Shire-stones placed at the meeting-point of the counties, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire. They stand by the wayside on the top of the Wrynose Pass, and it used to be reckoned a proud thing to say that, by touching them at the same time with feet and hands, one had been in the three counties at once. At what point of its course the stream takes the name of Duddon I do not know. I first became acquainted with the Duddon, as I have good reason to remember, in early boyhood. Upon the banks of the Derwent I had learnt to be very fond of angling. Fish abound in that large river; not so in the small streams in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead; and I fell into the common delusion that the farther from home the better sport would be had. Accordingly, one day I attached myself to a person living in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead, who was going to try his fortune as an angler near the source of the Duddon. We fished a great part of the day with very sorry success, the rain pouring torrents, and long before we got home I was worn out with fatigue; and, if the good man had not carried me on his back, I must have lain down under the best shelter I could find. Little did I think then it would be my lot to celebrate, in a strain of love and admiration, the stream which for many years I never thought of without recollections of disappointment and distress.

During my college vacation, and two or three years afterwards, before taking my Bachelor's degree, I was several times resident in the house of a near relative who lived in the small town of Broughton. I passed many delightful hours upon the banks of this river, which becomes an estuary about a mile from that place. The remembrances of that period are the subject of the 21st Sonnet. The subject of the 27th is in fact taken from a tradition belonging to Rydal Hall, which once stood, as is believed, upon a rocky and woody hill on the right hand as you go from Rydal to Ambleside, and was deserted from the superstitious fear here described, and the present site fortunately chosen instead. The present Hall was erected by Sir Michael le Fleming, and it may be hoped that at some future time there will be an edifice more worthy of so beautiful a position. With regard to the 30th Sonnet it is odd enough that this imagination was realised in the year 1840, when I made a tour through that district with my wife and daughter, Miss Fenwick and her niece, and Mr. and Miss Quillinan. Before our return from Seathwaite chapel the party separated. Mrs. Wordsworth, while most of us went further up the stream, chose an opposite direction, having told us that we should overtake her on our way to Ulpha. But she was tempted out of the main road to ascend a rocky eminence near it, thinking it impossible we should pass without seeing her. This, however, unfortunately happened, and then ensued vexation and distress, especially to me, which I should be ashamed to have recorded, for I lost my temper entirely. Neither I nor those that were with me saw her again till we reached the Inn at Broughton,

seven miles. This may perhaps in some degree excuse my irritability on the occasion, for I could not but think she had been much to blame. It appeared, however, on explanation, that she had remained on the rock, calling out and waving her handkerchief as we were passing, in order that we also might ascend and enjoy a prospect which had much charmed her. "But on we went, her signals proving vain." How then could she reach Broughton before us? When we found she had not gone on before to Ulpha Kirk, Mr. Quillinan went back in one of the carriages in search of her. He met her on the road, took her up, and by a shorter way conveyed her to Broughton, where we were all reunited and spent a happy evening.

I have many affecting remembrances connected with this stream. Those I forbear to mention; especially things that occurred on its banks during the later part of that visit to the seashore of which the former part is detailed in my "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

TO

## THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON,  
AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1820)

1820. 1820

THE Minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings;  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check, the music of the strings, 10  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand;

And who but listened? — till was paid  
Respect to every Innate's claim:  
The greeting given, the music played,  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "merry Christmas" wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice  
That took thee from thy native hills; 20  
And it is given thee to rejoice.  
Though public care full often tills  
(Heaven only witness of the toil)  
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,  
Hadst heard this never-failing rite;  
And seen on other faces shine  
A true revival of the light  
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,  
In simple childhood, spread through ours. 30

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds;  
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,  
Or they are offered at the door  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear — and sink again to sleep!  
Or, at an earlier call, to mark, 40  
By blazing fire, the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;  
And some unbidden tears that rise  
For names once heard, and heard no more;  
Tears brightened by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,  
With ambient streams more pure and bright 50  
Than fabled Cytherea's zone  
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,  
Is to my heart of hearts endeared  
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,  
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;  
Remnants of love whose modest sense  
Thus into narrow room withdraws;  
Hail, Usages of pristine mould, 60  
And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought  
That slights this passion, or condemns;  
If these fond Fancy ever brought  
From the proud margin of the Thames,  
And Lambeth's venerable towers,  
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,  
Short leisure even in busiest days;  
Moments, to cast a look behind,  
And profit by those kindly rays 70  
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,  
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din  
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,  
A pleased attention I may win  
To agitations less severe,  
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,  
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

I

1820. 1820

NOT envying Latian shades — if yet they  
throw  
A grateful coolness round that crystal  
Spring,  
Blandusia, prattling as when long ago  
The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to  
sing;

Careless of flowers that in perennial blow  
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains  
cling;

Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering  
Through ice-built arches radiant as heaven's  
bow;

I seek the birthplace of a native Stream. —  
All hail, ye mountains ! hail, thou morning  
light !

Better to breathe at large on this clear  
height

Than toil in needless sleep from dream to  
dream:

Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free,  
and bright,

For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my  
theme !

## II

1820. 1820

CHILD of the clouds ! remote from every  
taint

Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;  
Thine are the honours of the lofty waste  
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys  
faint,

Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue  
quaint

Thy cradle decks ; — to chant thy birth, thou  
hast

No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,  
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint !  
She guards thee, ruthless Power ! who  
would not spare

Those mighty forests, once the bison's  
screen,

Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy  
lair

Through paths and alleys roofed with  
darkest green ;

Thousands of years before the silent air  
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter  
keen !

## III

1820. 1820

How shall I paint thee ? — Be this naked  
stone

My seat, while I give way to such intent ;  
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monu-  
ment,

Make to the eyes of men thy features known.

But as of all those tripping lambs not one  
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent  
To thy beginning nought that doth present  
Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.  
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,  
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem  
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's  
care ;

Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a  
gleam

Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness  
rare ;

Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother  
Earth !

## IV

1820. 1820

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain,  
take

This parting glance, no negligent adieu !  
A Protean change seems wrought while I  
pursue

The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth  
make ;

Or rather thou appear'st a glistening snake,  
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,  
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes,  
through

Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.  
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Kill  
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white foam ;  
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who  
hath clomb

So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;  
Else let the dastard backward wend, and  
roam,

Seeking less bold achievement, where he  
will !

## V

1820. 1820

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that  
played

With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful  
sound

Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy  
mound —

Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid  
The sun in heaven ! — but now, to form a  
shade

For Thee, green alders have together wound  
Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;  
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.

And thou hast also tempted here to rise,  
 'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude  
 and grey;  
 Whose ruddy children, by the mother's  
 eyes  
 Carelessly watched, sport through the sum-  
 mer day,  
 Thy pleased associates: — light as endless  
 May  
 On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

## VI

## FLOWERS

1820. 1820

ERE yet our course was graced with social  
 trees  
 It lacked not old remains of hawthorn  
 bowers,  
 Where small birds warbled to their para-  
 mours;  
 And, earlier still, was heard the hum of  
 bees;  
 I saw them ply their harmless robberies,  
 And caught the fragrance which the sundry  
 flowers,  
 Fed by the stream with soft perpetual  
 showers,  
 Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.  
 There bloomed the strawberry of the wilder-  
 ness;  
 The trembling eyebright showed her  
 sapphire blue,  
 The thyme her purple, like the blush of  
 Even;  
 And if the breath of some to no caress  
 Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,  
 All kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

## VII

1820. 1820

“CHANGE me, some God, into that breath-  
 ing rose !”  
 The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,  
 The envied flower beholding, as it lies  
 On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose;  
 Or he would pass into her bird, that throws  
 The darts of song from out its wiry cage;  
 Enraptured, — could he for himself engage  
 The thousandth part of what the Nymph  
 bestows;

And what the little careless innocent  
 Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice !  
 There are whose calmer mind it would  
 content  
 To be an uncultured floweret of the glen,  
 Fearless of plough and scythe; or darkling  
 wren  
 That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender  
 voice.

## VIII

1820. 1820

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,  
 First of his tribe, to this dark dell — who first  
 In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst ?  
 What hopes came with him ? what designs  
 were spread  
 Along his path ? His unprotected bed  
 What dreams encompassed ? Was the in-  
 truder nursed  
 In hideous usages, and rites accursed,  
 That thinned the living and disturbed the  
 dead ?  
 No voice replies; — both air and earth are  
 mute;  
 And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring  
 yield'st no more  
 Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit  
 Of ignorance thou might'st witness hereto-  
 fore,  
 Thy function was to heal and to restore,  
 To soothe and cleanse, not madden and  
 pollute !

## IX

## THE STEPPING-STONES

1820. 1820

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown  
 Into a Brook of loud and stately march,  
 Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch;  
 And, for like use, lo ! what might seem a  
 zone  
 Chosen for ornament — stone matched with  
 stone  
 In studied symmetry, with interspace  
 For the clear waters to pursue their race  
 Without restraint. How swiftly have they  
 flown,  
 Succeeding — still succeeding ! Here the  
 Child  
 Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce  
 and wild,



His budding courage to the proof; and  
 here  
 Declining Manhood learns to note the sly  
 And sure encroachments of infirmity,  
 Thinking how fast time runs, life's end  
 how near !

## X

## THE SAME SUBJECT

1820. 1820

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits  
 dance  
 With prompt emotion, urging them to  
 pass;  
 A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-  
 lass;  
 Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;  
 To stop ashamed — too timid to advance;  
 She ventures once again — another pause !  
 His outstretched hand He tauntingly with-  
 draws —  
 She sues for help with piteous utterance !  
 Chidden she chides again; the thrilling  
 touch  
 Both feel, when he renews the wished-for  
 aid:  
 Ah ! if their fluttering hearts should stir  
 too much,  
 Should beat too strongly, both may be be-  
 trayed.  
 The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock,  
 see  
 The struggle, clap their wings for victory !

## XI

## THE FAËRY CHASM

1820. 1820

No fiction was it of the antique age:  
 A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,  
 Is of the very footmarks unbereft  
 Which tiny Elves impressed; — on that  
 smooth stage  
 Dancing with all their brilliant equipage  
 In secret revels — haply after theft  
 Of some sweet Babe — Flower stolen, and  
 coarse Weed left  
 For the distracted Mother to assuage  
 Her grief with, as she might ! — But,  
 where, oh ! where  
 Is traceable a vestige of the notes

That ruled those dances wild in char-  
 acter ? —

Deep underground ? Or in the upper air,  
 On the shrill wind of midnight ? or where  
 floats  
 O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer ?

## XII

## HINTS FOR THE FANCY

1820. 1820

On, loitering Muse — the swift Stream  
 chides us — on !  
 Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immure  
 Objects immense portrayed in miniature,  
 Wild shapes for many a strange compari-  
 son !  
 Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon  
 Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,  
 Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to en-  
 dure  
 When the broad oak drops, a leafless  
 skeleton,  
 And the solidities of mortal pride,  
 Palace and tower, are crumbled into  
 dust ! —  
 The Bard who walks with Duddon for his  
 guide,  
 Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:  
 Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse —  
 we must;  
 And, if thou canst, leave them without  
 regret !

## XIII

## OPEN PROSPECT

1820. 1820

HAIL to the fields — with Dwellings sprin-  
 kled o'er,  
 And one small hamlet, under a green hill  
 Clustering, with barn and byre, and spout-  
 ing mill !  
 A glance suffices; — should we wish for  
 more,  
 Gay June would scorn us. But when bleak  
 winds roar  
 Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard  
 ash,  
 Dread swell of sound ! loud as the gusts  
 that lash  
 The matted forests of Ontario's shore

By wasteful steel unsmitten — then would I  
Turn into port; and, reckless of the gale,  
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,  
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling  
ale,

Laugh with the generous household heartily  
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale !

## XIV

1806. 1807

O MOUNTAIN Stream ! the Shepherd and  
his Cot

Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude;  
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude  
A field or two of brighter green, or plot  
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot  
Of stationary sunshine: — thou hast viewed  
These only, Duddon ! with their paths re-  
newed

By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.  
Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to  
leave,

Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,  
Though simple thy companions were and  
few;

And through this wilderness a passage  
cleave

Attended but by thy own voice, save when  
The clouds and fowls of the air thy way  
pursue !

## XV

1820. 1820

FROM this deep chasm, where quivering  
sunbeams play

Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold  
A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and  
cold;

A concave free from shrubs and mosses  
grey;

In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,  
Some Statue, placed amid these regions old  
For tutelary service, thence had rolled,  
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday !

Was it by mortals sculptured ? — weary  
slaves

Of slow endeavour ! or abruptly cast  
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast  
Tempestuously let loose from central caves ?  
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,  
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge  
passed ?

## XVI

## AMERICAN TRADITION

1820. 1820

SUCH fruitless questions may not long be-  
guile

Or plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured  
shows

Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;  
*There* would the Indian answer with a smile  
Aimed at the White Man's ignorance, the  
while,

Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they  
rose,

Covered the plains, and, wandering where  
they chose,

Mounted through every intricate defile,  
Triumphant — Inundation wide and deep,  
O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and  
steep

Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;  
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,  
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase  
or prey;

Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or  
deified !

## XVII

## RETURN

1820. 1820

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted  
yew,

Perched on whose top the Danish Raven  
croaks;

Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes  
Departed ages, shedding where he flew  
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that be-  
strew

The clouds and thrill the chambers of the  
rocks;

And into silence hush the timorous flocks,  
That, calmly couching while the nightly dew  
Moistened each fleece, beneath the twin-  
kling stars

Slept amid that lone Camp on Hardknot's  
height,

Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove  
and Mars:

Or, near that mystic Round of Druid frame  
Tardily sinking by its proper weight  
Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth  
breast it came !

## XVIII

## SEATHWAITE CHAPEL

1820. 1820

SACRED Religion ! "mother of form and fear,"  
 Dread arbitress of mutable respect,  
 New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,  
 Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;  
 Mother of Love ! (that name best suits thee here)  
 Mother of Love ! for this deep vale, protect  
 Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,  
 Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere  
 That seeks to stifle it;—as in those days  
 When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,  
 Whose good works formed an endless retinue:  
 A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;  
 Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;  
 And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise !

## XIX

## TRIBUTARY STREAM

1820. 1820

My frame hath often trembled with delight  
 When hope presented some far-distant good,  
 That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood  
 Of yon pure waters, from their airy height  
 Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;  
 Who, 'mid a world of images imprest  
 On the calm depth of his transparent breast,  
 Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,  
 The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all !  
 And seldom hath ear listened to a tune  
 More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,  
 Swoln by that voice—whose murmur musical  
 Announces to the thirsty fields a boon  
 Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

## XX

## THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE

1820. 1820

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,  
 Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains  
 Thy waters, Duddon ! 'mid these flowery plains—  
 The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,  
 Transferred to bowers imperishably green,  
 Had beautified Elysium ! But these chains  
 Will soon be broken;—a rough course remains,  
 Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid mien,  
 Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,  
 And countenanced like a soft cernlean sky,  
 Shalt change thy temper; and, with many a shock  
 Given and received in mutual jeopardy,  
 Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,  
 Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high !

## XXI

1820. 1820

WHENCE that low voice ?—A whisper from the heart,  
 That told of days long past, when here I roved  
 With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;  
 Some who had early mandates to depart,  
 Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart  
 By Duddon's side; once more do we unite,  
 Once more, beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light;  
 And smothered joys into new being start.  
 From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall  
 Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory;  
 Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free  
 As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall  
 On gales that breathe too gently to recall  
 Aught of the fading year's inclemency !

## XXII

## TRADITION

1820. 1820

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant time,  
 Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass

In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;  
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from the  
prime

Derives its name, reflected, as the chime  
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:  
The starry treasure from the blue profound  
She longed to ravish; — shall she plunge, or  
climb

The humid precipice, and seize the guest  
Of April, smiling high in upper air?  
Desperate alternative! what fiend could  
dare

To prompt the thought? — Upon the steep  
rock's breast

The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,  
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

## XXIII

## SHEEP WASHING

1820. 1820

SAD thoughts, avaunt! — partake we their  
blithe cheer

Who gathered in betimes the unshorn flock  
To wash the fleece, where haply bands of  
rock,

Checking the stream, make a pool smooth  
and clear

As this we look on. Distant Mountains hear,  
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites  
Clamour of boys with innocent despites  
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange  
fear.

And what if Duddon's spotless flood receive  
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise  
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive  
Such wrong; nor need we blame the li-  
censed joys,

Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise:  
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

## XXIV

## THE RESTING-PLACE

1820. 1820

MID-NOON is past; — upon the sultry mead  
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow  
throws:

If we advance unstrengthened by repose,  
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!  
This Nook — with woodbine hung and  
straggling weed

Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,  
Half grot, half arbour — proffers to en-  
close

Body and mind, from molestation freed,  
In narrow compass — narrow as itself:  
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,  
Be loth that we should breathe awhile ex-  
empt

From new incitements friendly to our task,  
Here wants not stealthy prospect, that may  
tempt

Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

## XXV

1820. 1820

METHINKS 't were no unprecedented feat  
Should some benignant Minister of air  
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,  
The One for whom my heart shall ever  
beat

With tenderest love; — or, if a safer seat  
Atween his downy wings be furnished,  
there

Would lodge her, and the cherished burden  
bear

O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!  
Rough ways my steps have trod; — too  
rough and long

For her companionship; here dwells soft  
ease:

With sweets that she partakes not, some  
distaste

Mingles, and lurking consciousness of  
wrong;

Languish the flowers; the waters seem to  
waste

Their vocal charm; their sparklings cease  
to please.

## XXVI

1820. 1820

RETURN, Content! for fondly I pursued,  
Even when a child, the Streams — un-  
heard, unseen;

Through tangled woods, impending rocks  
between;

Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed  
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold  
brood —

Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous,  
keen,

Green as the salt-sea billows, white and  
 green —  
 Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !  
 Nor have I tracked their course for scanty  
 gains;  
 They taught me random cares and truant  
 joys,  
 That shield from mischief and preserve  
 from stains  
 Vague minds, while men are growing out  
 of boys;  
 Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise  
 Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile  
 reins.

## XXVII

1820. 1820

FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless heap,  
 Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,  
 Is that embattled House, whose massy  
 Keep,  
 Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and  
 cold.  
 There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the  
 bold;  
 Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep  
 Of winds — though winds were silent —  
 struck a deep  
 And lasting terror through that ancient  
 Hold.  
 Its line of Warriors fled; — they shrunk  
 when tried  
 By ghostly power: — but Time's unsparing  
 hand  
 Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from  
 out the land;  
 And now, if men with men in peace abide,  
 All other strength the weakest may with-  
 stand,  
 All worse assaults may safely be defied.

## XXVIII

## JOURNEY RENEWED

1820. 1820

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-oppress,  
 Crowded together under rustling trees  
 Brushed by the current of the water-  
 breeze;  
 And for their sakes, and love of all that  
 rest,

On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering  
 nest;  
 For all the startled scaly tribes that slink  
 Into his coverts, and each fearless link  
 Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;  
 For these, and hopes and recollections worn  
 Close to the vital seat of human clay;  
 Glad meetings, tender partings, that up-  
 stay  
 The drooping mind of absence, by vows  
 sworn  
 In his pure presence near the trysting  
 thorn —  
 I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

## XXIX

1820. 1820

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,  
 Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired  
 domains;  
 Tells that their turf drank purple from the  
 veins  
 Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,  
 Till doubtful combat issued in a trance  
 Of victory, that struck through heart and  
 reins  
 Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,  
 And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.  
 Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie  
 In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,  
 The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;  
 The Torrents chant their praise, inspiring  
 scorn  
 Of power usurped; with proclamation high,  
 And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

## XXX

1820. 1820

Who swerves from innocence, who makes  
 divorce  
 Of that serene companion — a good name,  
 Recovers not his loss; but walks with  
 shame,  
 With doubt, with fear, and haply with re-  
 morse:  
 And oft-times he — who, yielding to the  
 force  
 Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,  
 From chosen comrade turns, or faithful  
 friend —  
 In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.

Not so with such as loosely wear the  
chain  
That binds them, pleasant River! to thy  
side:—  
Through the rough copse wheel thou with  
hasty stride;  
I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,  
Sure, when the separation has been tried,  
That we, who part in love, shall meet  
again.

## XXXI

1820. 1820

THE KIRK of ULPHA to the pilgrim's eye  
Is welcome as a star, that doth present  
Its shining forehead through the peaceful  
rent  
Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the  
sky:  
Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high  
O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's  
tent;  
Or the Indian tree whose branches, down-  
ward bent,  
Take root again, a boundless canopy.  
How sweet were leisure! could it yield no  
more  
Than 'mid that wave-washed Churchyard  
to recline,  
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts  
divine;  
Or there to pace, and mark the summits  
hoar  
Of distant moonlit mountains faintly shine,  
Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

## XXXII

1820. 1820

Nor hurled precipitous from steep to steep;  
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled  
lands  
And blooming thickets; nor by rocky bands  
Held; but in radiant progress toward the  
Deep  
Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep  
Sink, and forget their nature — now expands  
Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands  
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!  
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide  
Is opened round him:— hamlets, towers,  
and towns,

And blue-topped hills, behold him from  
afar;  
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,  
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,  
With commerce freighted, or triumphant  
war.

## XXXIII

## CONCLUSION

1820. 1820

BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale;  
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast  
A crimson splendour: lowly is the mast  
That rises here, and humbly spread, the  
sail;  
While, less disturbed than in the narrow  
Vale  
Through which with strange vicissitudes he  
passed,  
The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast  
Where all his unambitious functions fail  
And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be  
free —  
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,  
And each tumultuous working left behind  
At seemly distance — to advance like Thee;  
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind  
And soul, to mingle with Eternity!

## XXXIV

## AFTER-THOUGHT

1820. 1820

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
As being past away. — Vain sympathies!  
For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever  
glide;  
The Form remains, the Function never dies;  
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish; — be it so!  
Enough, if something from our hands have  
power  
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's tran-  
scendent dower,  
We feel that we are greater than we know.*

A PARSONAGE IN OXFORD-  
SHIRE

1820. 1822

This Parsonage was the residence of my friend Jones, and is particularly described in another note.

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,  
Is marked by no distinguishable line;  
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine;  
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,  
Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,  
And neighbours rest together, here con-found  
Their several features, mingled like the sound  
Of many waters, or as evening blends  
With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,  
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave;  
And while those lofty poplars gently wave  
Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky  
Bright as the glimpses of eternity,  
To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

## TO ENTERPRISE

1820. 1822

KEEP for the Young the impassioned smile  
Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee stand  
High on that chalky cliff of Britain's Isle,  
A slender volume grasping in thy hand —  
(Perchance the pages that relate  
The various turns of Crusoe's fate) —  
Ah, spare the exulting smile,  
And drop thy pointing finger bright  
As the first flash of beacon light;  
But neither veil thy head in shadows dim, 10  
Nor turn thy face away  
From One who, in the evening of his day,  
To thee would offer no presumptuous hymn!

I

Bold Spirit! who art free to rove  
Among the starry courts of Jove,

And oft in splendour dost appear  
Embodied to poetic eyes,  
While traversing this nether sphere,  
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.  
Daughter of Hope! her favourite Child, 20  
Whom she to young Ambition bore,  
When hunter's arrow first defiled  
The grove, and stained the turf with gore;  
Thee winged Fancy took, and nursed  
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,  
And where the mightier Waters burst  
From caves of Indian mountains hoar!  
She wrapped thee in a panther's skin;  
And Thou, thy favourite food to win,  
The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare 30  
From her rock-fortress in mid air,  
With infant shout; and often sweep,  
Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain;  
Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep  
Upon the couchant lion's mane!  
With rolling years thy strength increased  
And, far beyond thy native East,  
To thee, by varying titles known  
As variously thy power was shown,  
Did incense-bearing altars rise, 40  
Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,  
From suppliants panting for the skies!

II

What though this ancient Earth be trod  
No more by step of Demi-god  
Mounting from glorious deed to deed  
As thou from clime to clime didst lead;  
Yet still, the bosom beating high,  
And the hushed farewell of an eye  
Where no procrastinating gaze 50  
A last infirmity betrays,  
Prove that thy heaven-descended sway  
Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.  
By thy divinity impelled,  
The Stripling seeks the tented field;  
The aspiring Virgin kneels; and, pale  
With awe, receives the hallowed veil,  
A soft and tender Heroine  
Vowed to severer discipline;  
Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy  
Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy, 60  
And of the ocean's dismal breast  
A play-ground, — or a couch of rest;  
'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,  
Thou to his dangers dost enchain  
The Chamois-chaser awed in vain  
By chasm or dizzy precipice;  
And hast Thou not with triumph seen  
How soaring Mortals glide between

Or through the clouds, and brave the light  
 With bolder than Icarian flight ?  
 How they, in bells of crystal, dive —  
 Where winds and waters cease to strive —  
 For no unholy visitings,  
 Among the monsters of the Deep;  
 And all the sad and precious things  
 Which there in ghastly silence sleep ?  
 Or, adverse tides and currents headed,  
 And breathless calms no longer dreaded,  
 In never-slackening voyage go  
 Straight as an arrow from the bow;      80  
 And, slighting sails and scorning oars,  
 Keep faith with Time on distant shores ?  
 — Within our fearless reach are placed  
 The secrets of the burning Waste;  
 Egyptian tombs unlock their dead,  
 Nile trembles at his fountain head;  
 Thou speak'st — and lo ! the polar Seas  
 Unbosom their last mysteries.  
 — But oh ! what transports, what sublime  
     reward,  
 Won from the world of mind, dost thou  
     prepare      90  
 For philosophic Sage; or high-souled Bard  
 Who, for thy service trained in lonely  
     woods,  
 Hath fed on pageants floating through the  
     air,  
 Or calefrented in depth of limpid floods;  
 Nor grieves — tho' doomed thro' silent  
     night to bear  
 The domination of his glorious themes,  
 Or struggle in the net-work of thy dreams !

## III

If there be movements in the Patriot's  
     soul,  
 From source still deeper, and of higher  
     worth,  
 'Tis thine the quickening impulse to con-  
     trol,      100  
 And in due season send the mandate  
     forth;  
 Thy call a prostrate Nation can restore,  
 When but a single Mind resolves to crouch  
     no more.

## IV

Dread Minister of wrath !  
 Who to their destined punishment dost  
     urge  
 The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of hard-  
     ened heart !  
 Not unassisted by the flattering stars,

Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path  
 When they in pomp depart      109  
 With trampling horses and refulgent cars —  
 Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge;  
 Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown  
     strands;  
 Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands —  
 An Army now, and now a living hill  
 That a brief while heaves with convulsive  
     throes —  
 Then all is still;  
 Or, to forget their madness and their  
     woes,  
 Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless snows !

## V

Back flows the willing current of my  
     Song:  
 If to provoke such doom the Impious  
     dare,      120  
 Why should it daunt a blameless prayer ?  
 — Bold Goddess ! range our Youth among;  
 Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat  
 In hearts no longer young;  
 Still may a veteran Few have pride  
 In thoughts whose sternness makes them  
     sweet;  
 In fixed resolves by Reason justified;  
 That to their object cleave like sleet  
 Whitening a pine tree's northern side,  
 When fields are naked far and wide,      130  
 And withered leaves, from earth's cold  
     breast  
 Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can find  
     rest.

## VI

But, if such homage thou disdain  
 As doth with mellowing years agree,  
 One rarely absent from thy train  
 More humble favours may obtain  
 For thy contented Votary.  
 She, who incites the frolic lambs  
 In presence of their heedless dams,  
 And to the solitary fawn      140  
 Vouchsafes her lessons, bounteous Nymph  
 That wakes the breeze, the sparkling lymph  
 Doth hurry to the lawn;  
 She, who inspires that strain of joyance holy  
 Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the mel-  
     ancholy,  
 Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead for  
     me;  
 And vernal mornings opening bright  
 With views of undefined delight,



And cheerful songs, and suns that shine  
On busy days, with thankful nights, be  
mine. 150

## VII

But thou, O Goddess ! in thy favourite Isle  
(Freedom's impregnable redoubt,  
The wide earth's store-house fenced about

With breakers roaring to the gales  
That stretch a thousand thousand sails)  
Quicken the slothful, and exalt the vile ! —  
Thy impulse is the life of Fame;  
Glad Hope would almost cease to be  
If torn from thy society;  
And Love, when worthiest of his name, 160  
Is proud to walk the earth with Thee !

## ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS

## IN SERIES

1821. 1822

My purpose in writing this Series was, as much as possible, to confine my view to the introduction, progress, and operation of the Church in England, both previous and subsequent to the Reformation. The Sonnets were written long before ecclesiastical history and points of doctrine had excited the interest with which they have been recently enquired into and discussed. The former particular is mentioned as an excuse for my having fallen into error in respect to an incident which had been selected as setting forth the height to which the power of the Popedom over temporal sovereignty had attained, and the arrogance with which it was displayed. I allude to the last Sonnet but one in the first series, where Pope Alexander the third at Venice is described as setting his foot on the neck of the Emperor Barbarossa. Though this is related as a fact in history, I am told it is a mere legend of no authority. Substitute for it an undeniable truth not less fitted for my purpose, namely, the penance inflicted by Gregory the Seventh upon the Emperor Henry the Fourth.

Before I conclude my notice of these Sonnets, let me observe that the opinion I pronounced in favour of Land (long before the Oxford Tract movement) and which had brought censure upon me from several quarters, is not in the least changed. Omitting here to examine into his conduct in respect to the persecuting spirit with which he has been charged, I am persuaded that most of his aims to restore ritual practices which had been abandoned were good and wise, whatever errors he might commit in the manner he sometimes attempted to enforce them. I further believe that, had not he, and others who shared his opinions and felt as he did, stood up in opposition to the reformers of that period, it is questionable whether the Church would ever have recovered its lost ground and become the blessing it now is, and will, I trust, become in a still greater degree, both to those of its communion and to those who unfortunately are separated from it.

## PART I

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies  
Profounder Tracts, and by a blest surprise  
Convert delight into a Sacrifice."

## I

## INTRODUCTION

1821. 1822

I, who accompanied with faithful pace  
Cerulean Duddon from his cloud-fed spring,  
And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing  
Of mountain quiet and boon nature's grace;

I, who essayed the nobler Stream to  
trace  
Of Liberty, and smote the plausible string  
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumph-  
ing,  
Won for herself a lasting resting-place;  
Now seek upon the heights of Time the  
source  
Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are  
found  
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that  
have crowned  
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless  
force;  
And, for delight of him who tracks its  
course,  
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

II  
CONJECTURES

1821. 1822

If there be prophets on whose spirits rest  
Past things, revealed like future, they can  
tell

What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred well  
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island  
blessed

With its first bounty. Wandering through  
the west,

Did holy Paul a while in Britain dwell,  
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,  
And with dread signs the nascent Stream  
invest ?

Or He, whose bonds dropped off, whose  
prison doors

Flew open, by an Angel's voice unbarred ?  
Or some of humbler name, to these wild  
shores

Storm-driven; who, having seen the cup of  
woe

Pass from their Master, sojourned here to  
guard

The precious Current they had taught to  
flow ?

III  
TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS

1821. 1822

SCREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the  
seamew — white

As Menai's foam; and toward the mystic  
ring

Where Augurs stand, the Future question-  
ing,

Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy flight,  
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,

That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er  
Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.

Haughty the Bard: can these meek doctrines  
blight

His transports ? wither his heroic strains ?  
But all shall be fulfilled; — the Julian  
spear

A way first opened; and, with Roman  
chains,

The tidings come of Jesus crucified;  
They come — they spread — the weak, the  
suffering, hear;

Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

IV  
DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION

1821. 1822

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy road,  
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of  
fire

And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,  
From every sympathy that Man bestowed !  
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to God,  
Ancient of days ! that to the eternal Sire,  
'These jealous Ministers of law aspire,  
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom  
flowed,

Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,  
As if with prescience of the coming storm,  
That intimation when the stars were shaped;  
And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the primal  
truth

Glimmers through many a superstitious  
form

That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

V  
UNCERTAINTY

1821. 1822

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are  
lost

On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian coves,  
Or where the solitary shepherd roves

Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost  
Of Time and shadows of Tradition, crost;

And where the boatman of the Western  
Isles

Slackens his course — to mark those holy  
piles

Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.

Nor these, nor monuments of eldest name,  
Nor Taliesin's unforgetten lays,

Nor characters of Greek or Roman fame,  
To an unquestionable Source have led;

Enough — if eyes, that sought the fountain-  
head

In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

VI  
PERSECUTION

1821. 1822

LAMENT ! for Diocletian's fiery sword  
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct

With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon  
linked  
Which God's ethereal store-houses afford:  
Against the Followers of the incarnate Lord  
It rages; some are smitten in the field —  
Some pierced to the heart through the in-  
effectual shield  
Of sacred home; — with pomp are others  
gored  
And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban  
tried,  
England's first Martyr, whom no threats  
could shake;  
Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,  
And for the faith; nor shall his name for-  
sake  
That Hill, whose flowery platform seems  
to rise  
By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice.

## VII

## RECOVERY

1821. 1822

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds  
regain  
Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim  
Their nests, or chant a gratulating hymn  
To the blue ether and bespangled plain;  
Even so, in many a re-constructed fane,  
Have the survivors of this Storm renewed  
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude:  
And solemn ceremonials they ordain  
To celebrate their great deliverance;  
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their fear —  
That persecution, blind with rage extreme,  
May not the less, through Heaven's mild  
countenance,  
Even in her own despite, both feed and  
cheer;  
For all things are less dreadful than they  
seem.

## VIII

## TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS

1821. 1822

WATCH, and be firm! for, soul-subduing  
vice,  
Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.  
Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,  
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,

Their radiance through the woods — may  
yet suffice  
To sap your hardy virtue, and abate  
Your love of Him upon whose forehead sate  
The crown of thorns; whose life-blood  
flowed, the price  
Of your redemption. Shun the insidious arts  
That Rome provides, less dreading from  
her frown  
Than from her wily praise, her peaceful  
gown,  
Language, and letters; — these, though  
fondly viewed  
As humanising graces, are but parts  
And instruments of deadliest servitude!

## IX

## DISSENSIONS

1821. 1822

THAT heresies should strike (if truth be  
scanned  
Presumptuously) their roots both wide and  
deep,  
Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.  
Lo! Discord at the altar dares to stand  
Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery  
brand,  
A cherished Priestess of the new-baptized!  
But chastisement shall follow peace de-  
spised.  
The Pietish cloud darkens the enervate land  
By Rome abandoned; vain are suppliant  
cries,  
And prayers that would undo her forced  
farewell;  
For she returns not. — Awed by her own  
knell,  
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies  
Soon to become more dreaded enemies  
Than heartless misery called them to repel.

## X

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST  
THE BARBARIANS

1821. 1822

RISE! — they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin  
ask  
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious  
friends:  
The Spirit of Caractacus descends  
Upon the Patriots, animates their task; —

Amazement runs before the towering casque  
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field  
The virgin sculptured on his Christian  
shield: —

Stretched in the sunny light of victory  
bask

The Host that followed Urien as he strode  
O'er heaps of slain; — from Cambrian wood  
and moss

Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross;

Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still  
abode,

Rush on the fight, to harps preferring  
swords,

And everlasting deeds to burning words !

## XI

## SAXON CONQUEST

1821. 1822

NOR wants the cause the panic-striking aid  
Of hallelujahs tost from hill to hill —  
For instant victory. But Heaven's high  
will

Permits a second and a darker shade  
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,  
The Relics of the sword flee to the moun-  
tains:

O wretched Land ! whose tears have flowed  
like fountains;

Whose arts and honours in the dust are laid  
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of Earth;  
Who, as the fields and woods have given  
them birth,

Will build their savage fortunes only there;  
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the girth  
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what they  
were.

## XII

## MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR

1821. 1822

*THE oppression of the tumult — wrath and  
scorn —*

*The tribulation — and the gleaming blades —*  
Such is the impetuous spirit that pervades  
The song of Taliesin; — Ours shall mourn  
The unarmed Host who by their prayers  
would turn

The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard  
the store

Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,

And Christian monuments, that now must  
burn

To senseless ashes. Mark ! how all things  
swerve

From their known course, or vanish like a  
dream;

Another language spreads from coast to  
coast;

Only perchance some melancholy Stream  
And some indignant Hills old names pre-  
serve,

When laws, and creeds, and people all are  
lost !

## XIII

## CASUAL INCITEMENT

1821. 1822

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful  
slaves,

Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale  
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,  
Where Tiber's stream the immortal City  
laves:

ANGLI by name; and not an ANGEL waves  
His wing who could seem lovelier to man's  
eye

Than they appear to holy Gregory;  
Who, having learnt that name, salvation  
craves

For Them, and for their Land. The ear-  
nest Sire,

His questions urging, feels, in slender ties  
Of chiming sound, commanding sympathies;  
DE-IRIANS — he would save them from  
God's IRE;

Subjects of Saxon ÆLLA — they shall sing  
Glad HALLE-lujahs to the eternal King !

## XIV

## GLAD TIDINGS

1821. 1822

FOR ever hallowed be this morning fair,  
Blest be the unconscious shore on which  
ye tread,

And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead  
Of martial banner, in procession bear;  
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,  
The pictured Saviour ! — By Augustin led,  
They come — and onward travel without  
dread,

Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful  
prayer —

Sung for themselves, and those whom they  
would free !  
Rich conquest waits them: — the tempestu-  
ous sea  
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high  
And heeded not the voice of clashing  
swords,  
These good men humble by a few bare  
words,  
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

XV

PAULINUS

1821. 1822

BUT, to remote Northumbria's royal Hall,  
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the  
school  
Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,  
*Who* comes with functions apostolical ?  
Mark him, of shoulders curved, and stature  
tall,  
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre  
cheek,  
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak;  
A Man whose aspect doth at once appal  
And strike with reverence. The Monarch  
leans  
Toward the pure truths this Delegate pro-  
pounds,  
Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds  
With careful hesitation, — then convenes  
A synod of his Councillors: — give ear,  
And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear !

XVI

PERSUASION

1821. 1822

"MAN's life is like a Sparrow, mighty  
King !  
That — while at banquet with your Chiefs  
you sit  
Housed near a blazing fire — is seen to flit  
Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,  
Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing,  
Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;  
But whence it came we know not, nor be-  
hold  
Whither it goes. Even such, that transient  
Thing,  
The human Soul; not utterly unknown  
While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;

But from what world She came, what woe  
or weal  
On her departure waits, no tongue hath  
shown;  
This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,  
His be a welcome cordially bestowed !"

XVII

CONVERSION

1821. 1822

PROMPT transformation works the novel  
Lore;  
The Council closed, the Priest in full career  
Rides forth, an armed man, and hurls a  
spear  
To desecrate the Fane which heretofore  
He served in folly. Woden falls, and Thor  
Is overturned; the mace, in battle heaved  
(So might they dream) till victory was  
achieved,  
Drops, and the God himself is seen no  
more.  
Temple and Altar sink, to hide their shame  
Amid oblivious weeds. "*O come to me,*  
*Ye heavy laden !*" such the inviting voice  
Heard near fresh streams; and thousands,  
who rejoice  
In the new Rite, the pledge of sanctity,  
Shall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

XVIII

APOLOGY

1821. 1822

NOR scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth  
lend  
The Soul's eternal interests to promote:  
Death, darkness, danger, are our natural  
lot;  
And evil Spirits *may* our walk attend  
For aught the wisest know or comprehend;  
Then be *good* Spirits free to breathe a note  
Of elevation; let their odours float  
Around these Converts; and their glories  
blend,  
The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze  
Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden  
cords  
Of good works, mingling with the visions,  
raise  
The Soul to purer worlds: and *who* the  
line

Shall draw, the limits of the power define,  
That even imperfect faith to man affords ?

## XIX

## PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY

1821. 1822

How beautiful your presence, how benign,  
Servants of God ! who not a thought will  
share  
With the vain world ; who, outwardly as  
bare  
As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign  
That the firm soul is clothed with fruit  
divine !  
Such Priest, when service worthy of his  
care  
Has called him forth to breathe the com-  
mon air,  
Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine  
Descended : — happy are the eyes that  
meet  
The Apparition ; evil thoughts are stayed  
At his approach, and low-bowed necks  
entreat  
A benediction from his voice or hand ;  
Whence grace, through which the heart  
can understand,  
And vows, that bind the will, in silence  
made.

## XX

## OTHER INFLUENCES

1821. 1822

AH, when the Body, round which in love  
we clung,  
Is chilled by death, does mutual service  
fail ?  
Is tender pity then of no avail ?  
Are intercessions of the fervent tongue  
A waste of hope ? — From this sad source  
have sprung  
Rites that console the Spirit, under grief  
Which ill can brook more rational relief :  
Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and  
dirges sung  
For Souls whose doom is fixed ! The way  
is smooth  
For Power that travels with the human  
heart :  
Confession ministers the pang to soothe  
In him who at the ghost of guilt doth  
start.

Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,  
Of your own mighty instruments beware !

## XXI

## SECLUSION

1821. 1822

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished, at  
his side  
A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,  
Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's  
crook,  
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world —  
to hide  
His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide  
In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell  
In soft repose he comes : within his cell,  
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,  
At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent  
hour,  
Do penitential cogitations cling ;  
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they  
twine  
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine ;  
Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they  
bring,  
For recompence — their own perennial  
bower.

## XXII

## CONTINUED

1821. 1822

METHINKS that to some vacant hermitage  
My feet would rather turn — to some dry  
nook  
Scooped out of living rock, and near a brook  
Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage  
to stage,  
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling  
rage  
In the soft heaven of a translucent pool ;  
Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,  
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage  
Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,  
A maple dish, my furniture should be ;  
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed ; the hooting  
owl  
My night-watch : nor should e'er the crested  
fowl  
From thorp or vill his matins sound for  
me,  
Tired of the world and all its industry.

XXIII  
REPROOF  
1821. 1822

BUT what if One, through grove or flowery mead,  
Indulging thus at will the creeping feet  
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet  
Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede !  
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed  
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat  
Of learning, where thou heard'st the billows beat  
On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed  
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse !  
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt  
Imposed on human kind, must first forget  
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use  
Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,  
The last dear service of thy passing breath !

XXIV  
SAXON MONASTERIES. AND LIGHTS  
AND SHADES OF THE RELIGION  
1821. 1822

By such examples moved to unbought pains,  
The people work like congregated bees;  
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses  
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains  
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely rains  
Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,  
Justice and peace: — bold faith ! yet also  
rise  
The sacred Structures for less doubtful  
gains.  
The Sensual think with reverence of the  
palms  
Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the  
grave  
If penance be redeemable, thence alms  
Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;  
And if full oft the Sanctuary save  
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV  
MISSIONS AND TRAVELS  
1821. 1822

NOR sedentary all: there are who roam  
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores;

Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn  
floors  
To seek the general mart of Christendom;  
Whence they, like richly-laden merchants,  
come  
To their beloved cells: — or shall we say  
That, like the Red-cross Knight, they urge  
their way,  
To lead in memorable triumph home  
Truth, their immortal Una ? Babylon,  
Learnèd and wise, hath perished utterly,  
Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid the  
sigh  
That would lament her; — Memphis, Tyre,  
are gone  
With all their Arts, — but classic lore glides  
on  
By these Religious saved for all posterity.

XXVI  
ALFRED  
1821. 1822

BEHOLD a pupil of the monkish gown,  
The pious ALFRED, King to Justice dear !  
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;  
Mirror of Princes ! Indigent Renown  
Might range the starry ether for a crown  
Equal to *his* deserts, who, like the year,  
Pours forth his bounty, like the day doth  
cheer,  
And awes like night with mercy-tempered  
frown.  
Ease from this noble miser of his time  
No moment steals; pain narrows not his  
cares.  
Though small his kingdom as a spark or  
gem,  
Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,  
And Christian India, through her wide-  
spread clime,  
In sacred converse gifts with Alfred shares.

XXVII  
HIS DESCENDANTS  
1821. 1822

WHEN thy great soul was freed from mortal  
chains,  
Darling of England ! many a bitter shower  
Fell on thy tomb; but emulative power  
Flowed in thy line through undegenerate  
veins.

The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains  
When dangers threaten, dangers ever new !  
Black tempests bursting, blacker still in  
view !

But manly sovereignty its hold retains ;  
The root sincere, the branches bold to strive  
With the fierce tempest, while, within the  
round

Of their protection, gentle virtues thrive ;  
As oft, 'mid some green plot of open ground,  
Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,  
The fostered hyacinths spread their purple  
bloom.

XXVIII

INFLUENCE ABUSED

1821. 1822

URGED by Ambition, who with subtlest skill  
Changes her means, the Enthusiast as a  
dupe

Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,  
And turn the instruments of good to ill,  
Moulding the credulous people to his will.  
Such DUNSTAN : — from its Benedictine coop  
Issues the master Mind, at whose fell swoop  
The chaste affections tremble to fulfil  
Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,  
The Might of spiritual sway ! his thoughts,  
his dreams,

Do in the supernatural world abide :  
So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled with  
pride

In what they see of virtues pushed to  
extremes,  
And sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX

DANISH CONQUESTS

1821. 1822

WOE to the Crown that doth the Cowl  
obey !

Dissension, checking arms that would re-  
strain

The incessant Rovers of the northern main,  
Helps to restore and spread a Pagan sway :  
But Gospel-truth is potent to allay

Fierceness and rage ; and soon the cruel  
Dane

Feels, through the influence of her gentle  
reign,

His native superstitions melt away.

Thus, often, when thick gloom the east  
o'ershrouds,  
The full-orbed Moon, slow climbing, doth  
appear

Silently to consume the heavy clouds ;  
*How* no one can resolve ; but every eye  
Around her sees, while air is hushed, a  
clear

And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

XXX

CANUTE

1821. 1822

A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,  
From Monks in Ely chanting service high,  
While-as Canute the King is rowing by :  
" My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King,  
" draw near,

That we the sweet song of the Monks may  
hear ! "

He listens (all past conquests, and all  
schemes

Of future, vanishing like empty dreams)  
Heart-touched, and haply not without a  
tear.

The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,  
While his free Barge skims the smooth  
flood along,

Gives to that rapture an accordant Rhyme.  
O suffering Earth ! be thankful : sternest  
clime

And rudest age are subject to the thrill  
Of heaven-descended Piety and Song.

XXXI

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

1821. 1822

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares  
The evanescence of the Saxon line.

Hark ! 't is the tolling Curfew ! — the stars  
shine ;

But of the lights that cherish household  
cares

And festive gladness, burns not one that  
dares

To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,  
Emblem and instrument, from Thames to  
Tyne,

Of force that daunts, and cunning that en-  
snares !



Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,  
That quench, from hut to palace, lamps and  
fires,  
Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires;  
Even so a thralldom, studious to expel  
Old laws, and ancient customs to derange,  
To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

XXXII

1821. 1837

COLDLY we spake. The Saxons, over-  
powered  
By wrong triumphant through its own ex-  
cess,  
From fields laid waste, from house and  
home devoured  
By flames, look up to heaven and crave re-  
dress  
From God's eternal justice. Pitiless  
Though men be, there are angels that can feel  
For wounds that death alone has power to  
heal,  
For penitent guilt, and innocent distress.  
And has a Champion risen in arms to try  
His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes  
no more;  
Him in their hearts the people canonize;  
And far above the mine's most precious ore  
The least small pittance of bare mould they  
prize  
Scooped from the sacred earth where his  
dear relics lie.

XXXIII

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT

1821. 1822

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profane-  
ness flow  
From Nazareth — source of Christian piety,  
From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of  
Agony  
And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go,  
With prayers and blessings we your path  
will sow;  
Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye  
Have chased far off by righteous victory  
These sons of Amalek, or laid them  
low!" —  
"GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly  
cry;  
Shout which the enraptured multitude as-  
tounds!

The Council-roof and Clermont's towers  
reply; —  
"God willeth it," from hill to hill rebounds,  
And, in awe-stricken Countries far and nigh,  
Through "Nature's hollow arch" that voice  
resounds.

XXXIV

CRUSADES

1821. 1822

THE turbaned Race are poured in thicken-  
ing swarms  
Along the west; though driven from Aqu-  
taine,  
The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain;  
And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;  
The scimitar, that yields not to the charms  
Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will disdain;  
Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian hills  
detain  
Their tents, and check the current of their  
arms.  
Then blame not those who, by the mightiest  
lever  
Known to the moral world, Imagination,  
Upheave, so seems it, from her natural sta-  
tion  
All Christendom: — they sweep along (was  
never  
So huge a host!) — to tear from the Un-  
believer  
The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

XXXV

RICHARD I

1821. 1822

REDOUTED King, of courage leonine,  
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip  
Thy warlike person with the staff and scrip;  
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine;  
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decline  
Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon her lip,  
And see love-emblems stream from thy  
ship,  
As thence she holds her way to Palestine.  
My Song, a fearless homager, would attend  
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the  
press  
Of war, but duty summons her away  
To tell — how, finding in the rash distress  
Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend,  
To giddy heights hath clomb the Papal  
sway.

XXXVI

AN INTERDICT

1821. 1822

REALMS quake by turns: proud Arbitress  
of grace,  
The Church, by mandate shadowing forth  
the power

She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,  
Closes the gates of every sacred place.  
Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace

All sacred things are covered: cheerful morn  
Grows sad as night — no seemly garb is worn,  
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face  
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are dumb;

Ditches are graves -- funeral rites denied;  
And in the churchyard he must take his bride  
Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly come  
Into the pensive heart ill fortified,  
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

XXXVII

PAPAL ABUSES

1821. 1822

As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,  
The gross materials of this world present  
A marvellous study of wild accident;  
Uncouth proximities of old and new;  
And bold transfigurations, more untrue  
(As might be deemed) to disciplined intent  
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,  
When most fantastic, offers to the view.  
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine?

Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia: --  
crown,  
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down  
At a proud Legate's feet! The spears that  
line

Baronial halls, the opprobrious insult feel;  
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII

SCENE IN VENICE

1821. 1822

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred  
head,  
To Cæsar's Successor the Pontiff spake;

"Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy  
neck  
Levelled with earth this foot of mine may  
tread."

Then he, who to the altar had been led,  
He, whose strong arm the Orient could not  
check,

He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,  
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,  
And even the common dignity of man! —  
Amazement strikes the crowd: while many  
turn

Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn  
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban  
From outraged Nature; but the sense of  
most

In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX

PAPAL DOMINION

1821. 1822

UNLESS to Peter's Chair the viewless wind  
Must come and ask permission when to  
blow,

What further empire would it have? for  
now

A ghostly Domination, unconfined  
As that by dreaming Bards to Love as-  
signed,

Sits there in sober truth — to raise the low,  
Perplex the wise, the strong to overthrow;  
Through earth and heaven to bind and to  
unbind! —

Resist — the thunder quails thee! — crouch  
— rebuff

Shall be thy recompence! from land to land  
The ancient thrones of Christendom are stuff  
For occupation of a magic wand,  
And 't is the Pope that wields it: — whether  
rough  
Or smooth his front, our world is in his  
hand!

PART II

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN  
THE REIGN OF CHARLES I

I

1821. 1845

How soon — alas! did Man, created pure —  
By Angels guarded, deviate from the line

Prescribed to duty: — woeful forfeiture  
 He made by wilful breach of law divine.  
 With like perverseness did the Church  
 abjure  
 Obedience to her Lord, and haste to twine,  
 'Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for aye  
 endure,  
 Weeds on whose front the world had fixed  
 her sign.  
 O Man, — if with thy trials thus it fares,  
 If good can smoothe the way to evil choice,  
 From all rash censure be the mind kept  
 free;  
 He only judges right who weighs, compares,  
 And in the sternest sentence which his  
 voice  
 Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

## II

1821. 1845

FROM false assumption rose, and, fondly  
 hailed  
 By superstition, spread the Papal power;  
 Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevailed  
 Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.  
 She daunts, forth-thundering from her  
 spiritual tower,  
 Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.  
 Justice and Peace through Her uphold their  
 claims;  
 And Chastity finds many a sheltering  
 bower.  
 Realm there is none that if controlled or  
 swayed  
 By her commands partakes not, in degree,  
 Of good, o'er manners, arts and arms,  
 diffused:  
 Yes, to thy domination, Roman See,  
 Tho' miserably, oft monstrously, abused  
 By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

## III

CISTERTIAN MONASTERY

1821. 1822

"*HERE Man more purely lives, less oft  
 doth fall,  
 More promptly rises, walks with stricter  
 heed,  
 More safely rests, dies happier, is freed  
 Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains  
 withal*

*A brighter crown."* — On yon Cistercian  
 wall  
 That confident assurance may be read;  
 And, to like shelter, from the world have  
 fled  
 Increasing multitudes. The potent call  
 Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's  
 desires;  
 Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee  
 Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,  
 A gentler life spreads round the holy spires;  
 Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste re-  
 tires,  
 And æry harvests crown the fertile lea.

## IV

1821. 1835

DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,  
 His whole life long tills it, with heartless  
 toil  
 Of villain-service, passing with the soil  
 To each new Master, like a steer or hound,  
 Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-bound;  
 But mark how gladly, through their own  
 domains,  
 The Monks relax or break these iron chains;  
 While Mercy, uttering, through their voice,  
 a sound  
 Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chiefs,  
 abate  
 These legalized oppressions! Man — whose  
 name  
 And nature God disdained not; Man —  
 whose soul  
 Christ died for — cannot forfeit his high  
 claim  
 To live and move exempt from all control  
 Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate!"

## V

MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN

1821. 1822

RECORD we too, with just and faithful  
 pen,  
 That many hooded Cenobites there are,  
 Who in their private cells have yet a care  
 Of public quiet; unambitious Men,  
 Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;  
 Whose fervent exhortations from afar  
 Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;  
 And oft-times in the most forbidding den

Of solitude, with love of science strong,  
How patiently the yoke of thought they bear,  
How subtly glide its finest threads along !  
Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere  
With mazy boundaries, as the astronomer  
With orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

VI

OTHER BENEFITS

1821. 1822

AND, not in vain embodied to the sight,  
Religion finds even in the stern retreat  
Of feudal sway her own appropriate seat;  
From the collegiate pumps on Windsor's  
height  
Down to the humbler altar, which the  
Knight  
And his retainers of the embattled hall  
Seek in domestic oratory small,  
For prayer in stillness, or the chanted rite;  
Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted  
round,  
Who teach the intrepid guardians of the  
place —  
Hourly exposed to death, with famine worn,  
And suffering under many a perilous  
wound —  
How sad would be their durance, if forlorn  
Of offices dispensing heavenly grace !

VII

CONTINUED

1821. 1822

AND what melodious sounds at times pre-  
vail !  
And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam  
Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream !  
What heartfelt fragrance mingles with the  
gale  
That swells the bosom of our passing sail !  
For where, but on *this* River's margin, blow  
Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the brow  
Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not  
fail ? ---  
Fair Court of Edward ! wonder of the  
world !  
I see a matchless blazonry unfurled  
Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love;  
And meekness tempering honourable pride;  
The lamb is couching by the lion's side,  
And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the dove.

VIII

CRUSADERS

1821. 1822

FURL we the sails, and pass with tardy oars  
Through these bright regions, casting many  
a glance  
Upon the dream-like issues — the romance  
Of many-coloured life that Fortune pours  
Round the Crusaders, till on distant shores  
Their labours end; or they return to lie,  
The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,  
Devoutly stretched upon their chancel floors.  
Am I deceived ? Or is their requiem  
chantered  
By voices never mute when Heaven unties  
Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies;  
Requiem which Earth takes up with voice  
undaunted,  
When she would tell how Brave, and Good,  
and Wise,  
For their high guerdon not in vain have  
panted !

IX

1842. 1845

As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest  
While from the Papal Unity there came,  
What feebler means had failed to give, one  
aim  
Diffused thro' all the regions of the West;  
So does her Unity its power attest  
By works of Art, that shed, on the out-  
ward frame  
Of worship, glory and grace, which who  
shall blame  
That ever looked to heaven for final rest ?  
Hail countless Temples ! that so well befit  
Your ministry; that, as ye rise and take  
Form, spirit and character from holy writ,  
Give to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,  
Pinions of high and higher sweep, and make  
The unconverted soul with awe submit.

X

1842. 1845

WHERE long and deeply hath been fixed  
the root  
In the blest soil of gospel truth, the Tree  
(Blighted or scathed tho' many branches be,  
Put forth to wither, many a hopeful shoot)

Can never cease to bear celestial fruit.  
 Witness the Church that oft-times, with  
     effect  
 Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to eject  
 Her bane, her vital energies recruit.  
 Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine,  
 When such good work is doomed to be un-  
     done,  
 The conquests lost that were so hardly  
     won: —  
 All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will  
     shine  
 In light confirmed while years their course  
     shall run,  
 'Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

## XI

## TRANSUBSTANTIATION

1821. 1822

ENOUGH! for see, with dim association  
 The tapers burn; the odorous incense feeds  
 A greedy flame; the pompous mass pro-  
     ceeds;  
 The Priest bestows the appointed consecra-  
     tion;  
 And, while the Host is raised, its elevation  
 An awe and supernatural horror breeds;  
 And all the people bow their heads, like  
     reeds  
 To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.  
 This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of  
     Rhône  
 He taught, till persecution chased him  
     thence,  
 To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.  
 Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,  
 'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy  
     throne,  
 From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

## XII

## THE VAUDOIS

1821. 1835

BUT whence came they who for the Saviour  
     Lord  
 Have long borne witness as the Scriptures  
     teach? —  
 Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach  
 In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,  
 Their fugitive Progenitors explored  
 Subalpine vales, in quest of safe retreats

Where that pure Church survives, though  
     summer heats  
 Open a passage to the Romish sword,  
 Far as it dares to follow. Herbs self-sown,  
 And fruitage gathered from the chestnut  
     wood,  
 Nourish the sufferers then; and mists, that  
     brood  
 O'er chasms with new-fallen obstacles be-  
     strown,  
 Protect them; and the eternal snow that  
     daunts  
 Aliens, is God's good winter for their haunts.

## XIII

1821. 1835

PAISED be the Rivers, from their moun-  
     tain springs  
 Shouting to Freedom, "Plant thy banners  
     here!"  
 To harassed Piety, "Dismiss thy fear,  
 And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled  
     wings!"  
 Nor be unthanked their final lingerings —  
 Silent, but not to high-souled Passion's  
     ear —  
 'Mid reedy fens wide-spread and marshes  
     drear,  
 Their own creation. Such glad welcome-  
     ings  
 As Po was heard to give where Venice  
     rose  
 Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth divine  
 Who near his fountains sought obscure re-  
     pose,  
 Yet came prepared as glorious lights to  
     shine,  
 Should that be needed for their sacred  
     Charge;  
 Blest Prisoners They, whose spirits were at  
     large!

## XIV

## WALDENSES

1821. 1822

THOSE had given earliest notice, as the  
     lark  
 Springs from the ground the morn to grat-  
     ulate;  
 Or rather rose the day to antedate,  
 By striking out a solitary spark,

When all the world with midnight gloom  
 was dark. —  
 Then followed the Waldensian bands, whom  
 Hate  
 In vain endeavours to exterminate,  
 Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous  
 bark:  
 But they desist not; — and the sacred fire,  
 Rekindled thus, from dens and savage  
 woods  
 Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,  
 Through courts, through camps, o'er limit-  
 ary floods;  
 Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share  
 Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

XV

ARCHBISHOP CHICHELY TO HENRY V

1821. 1822

“WHAT beast in wilderness or cultured  
 field  
 The lively beauty of the leopard shows ?  
 What flower in meadow-ground or garden  
 grows  
 That to the towering lily doth not yield ?  
 Let both meet only on thy royal shield !  
 Go forth, great King ! claim what thy  
 birth bestows;  
 Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes  
 Dare to usurp; — thou hast a sword to  
 wield,  
 And Heaven will crown the right.” — The  
 mitred Sire  
 Thus spake — and lo ! a Fleet, for Gaul  
 address,  
 Ploughs her bold course across the wonder-  
 ing seas;  
 For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast  
 Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,  
 But one that leaps to meet the fanning  
 breeze.

XVI

WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER

1821. 1822

Thus is the storm abated by the craft  
 Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect  
 The Church, whose power hath recently  
 been checked,  
 Whose monstrous riches threatened. So  
 the shaft

Of victory mounts high, and blood is quaffed  
 In fields that rival Cressy and Poitiers —  
 Pride to be washed away by bitter tears !  
 For deep as Hell itself, the avenging draught  
 Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal  
 power  
 Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual  
 truth  
 Maintains the else endangered gift of life;  
 Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;  
 And, under cover of this woeful strife,  
 Gathers unblighted strength from hour to  
 hour.

XVII

WICLIFFE

1821. 1822

ONCE more the Church is seized with sud-  
 den fear,  
 And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:  
 Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed  
 And flung into the brook that travels near;  
 Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams  
 can hear  
 Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon  
 the wind,  
 Though seldom heard by busy human  
 kind) —  
 “ As thou these ashes, little Brook ! wilt bear  
 Into the Avon, Avon to the tide  
 Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,  
 Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst  
 An emblem yields to friends and enemies  
 How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanctified  
 By truth, shall spread, throughout the  
 world dispersed.”

XVIII

CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY

1821. 1822

“Woe to you, Prelates ! rioting in ease  
 And cumbrous wealth - - the shame of your  
 estate;  
 You, on whose progress dazzling trains  
 await  
 Of pompous horses; whom vain titles please;  
 Who will be served by others on their  
 knees,  
 Yet will yourselves to God no service pay;  
 Pastors who neither take nor point the  
 way  
 To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities

Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know  
 And speak the word —— " Alas ! of fear-  
     ful things  
 'Tis the most fearful when the people's  
     eye  
 Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;  
 And taught the general voice to prophesy  
 Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

## XIX

## ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER

1821. 1822

AND what is Penance with her knotted  
     thong;  
 Mortification with the shirt of hair,  
 Wan cheek, and knees indurated with  
     prayer,  
 Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;  
 If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong  
 The pious, humble, useful Secular,  
 And rob the people of his daily care,  
 Scorning that world whose blindness makes  
     her strong ?  
 Inversion strange ! that, unto One who  
     lives  
 For self, and struggles with himself alone,  
 The amplest share of heavenly favour  
     gives;  
 That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem  
 Of God and man, place higher than to  
     him  
 Who on the good of others builds his own !

## XX

## MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS

1821. 1822

YET more, — round many a Convent's blaz-  
     ing fire  
 Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;  
 There Venus sits disguised like a Nun, —  
 While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of a  
     Friar,  
 Pours out his choicest beverage high and  
     higher  
 Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run  
 Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won  
 An instant kiss of masterful desire —  
 To stay the precious waste. Through  
     every brain  
 The domination of the sprightly juice

Spreads high conceits to madding Fancy  
     dear,  
 Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse  
 Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,  
 Whose votive burthen is — "OUR KING-  
     DOM 'S HERE !"

## XXI

## DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

1821. 1822

THREATS come which no submission may  
     assuage,  
 No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;  
 The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries  
     mute,  
 And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish  
     rage,  
 The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;  
 The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit;  
 And the green lizard and the gilded newt  
 Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.  
 The owl of evening and the woodland fox  
 For their abode the shrines of Waltham  
     choose.  
 Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse  
 To stoop her head before these desperate  
     shocks —  
 She whose high pomp displaced, as story tells,  
 Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

## XXII

## THE SAME SUBJECT

1821. 1822

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more meek  
 Through saintly habit than from effort due  
 To unrelenting mandates that pursue  
 With equal wrath the steps of strong and  
     weak)  
 Goes forth unveiling timidly a cheek  
 Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,  
 While through the Convent's gate to open  
     view  
 Softly she glides, another home to seek.  
 Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,  
 An Apparition more divinely bright !  
 Not more attractive to the dazzled sight  
 Those watery glories, on the stormy brine  
 Poured forth, while summer suns at dis-  
     tance shine,  
 And the green vales lie hushed in sober  
     light !

XXIII  
CONTINUED

1821. 1822

YET many a Novice of the cloistral shade,  
And many chained by vows, with eager glee  
The warrant hail, exulting to be free;  
Like ships before whose keels, full long  
    embayed  
In polar ice, propitious winds have made  
Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea,  
Their liquid world, for bold discovery,  
In all her quarters temptingly displayed !  
Hope guides the young; but when the old  
    must pass  
The threshold, whither shall they turn to find  
The hospitality — the alms (alas !  
Alms may be needed) which that House  
    bestowed ?  
Can they, in faith and worship, train the  
    mind  
To keep this new and questionable road ?

XXIV  
SAINTS  
1821. 1822

YE, too, must fly before a chasing hand,  
Angels and Saints, in every hamlet  
    mourned !  
Ah ! if the old idolatry be spurned,  
Let not your radiant Shapes desert the Land:  
Her adoration was not your demand,  
The fond heart proffered it the servile  
    heart;  
And therefore are ye summoned to depart,  
Michael, and thou, St. George, whose flam-  
    ing brand  
The Dragon quelled; and valiant Margaret  
Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:  
And rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen  
Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,  
Who in the penitential desert met  
Gales sweet as those that over Eden blew !

XXV  
THE VIRGIN  
1821. 1822

MOTHER ! whose virgin bosom was uncrust  
With the least shade of thought to sin  
    allied;

Woman ! above all women glorified,  
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;  
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;  
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak  
    strewn  
With fancied roses, than the unblemished  
    moon  
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue  
    coast;  
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I  
    ween,  
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might  
    bend,  
As to a visible Power, in which did blend  
All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee  
Of mother's love with maiden purity,  
Of high with low, celestial with terrene !

XXVI  
APOLOGY  
1821. 1822

NOT utterly unworthy to endure  
Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;  
Age after age to the arch of Christendom  
Aerial keystone haughtily secure;  
Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure,  
As many hold; and, therefore, to the tomb  
Pass, some through fire -- and by the scaffold  
    some -  
Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.  
" Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit  
Upon his throne;" unsoftened, undis-  
    mayed  
By aught that mingled with the tragic scene  
Of pity or fear: and More's gay genius  
    played  
With the inoffensive sword of native wit,  
Than the bare axe more luminous and keen.

XXVII  
IMAGINATIVE REGRETS  
1821. 1822

DEFF is the lamentation ! Not alone  
From Sages justly honoured by mankind;  
But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,  
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan  
Issues for that dominion overthrown:  
Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges,  
    blind  
As his own worshippers: and Nile, reclined  
Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan



Renews. Through every forest, cave, and  
den,  
Where frauds were hatched of old, hath  
sorrow past —  
Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native  
Waste,  
Where once his airy helpers schemed and  
planned  
'Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty men,  
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

XXVIII

## REFLECTIONS

1821. 1822

GRANT, that by this unsparing hurricane  
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn  
away,  
And goodly fruitage with the mother  
spray;  
'T were madness — wished we, therefore, to  
detain,  
With hands stretched forth in mollified dis-  
dain,  
The "trumpety" that ascends in bare dis-  
play —  
Bulls, pardons, relics, crows black, white,  
and grey —  
Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal plain  
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet not  
choice  
But habit rules the unreflecting herd,  
And airy bonds are hardest to disown;  
Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty trans-  
ferred  
Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice  
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

XXIX

## TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

1821. 1822

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,  
In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,  
Assumes the accents of our native tongue;  
And he who guides the plough, or wields  
the crook,  
With understanding spirit now may look  
Upon her records, listen to her song,  
And sift her laws — much wondering that  
the wrong,  
Which Israel has suffered, Heaven could  
calmly brook.

Transcendent boon ! noblest that earthly  
King  
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless  
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness !  
But passions spread like plagues, and thou-  
sands wild  
With bigotry shall tread the Offering  
Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

XXX

## THE POINT AT ISSUE

1821. 1827

For what contend the wise ? — for nothing  
less  
Than 'that the Soul, freed from the bonds of  
Sense,  
And to her God restored by evidence  
Of things not seen, drawn forth from their  
recess,  
Root there, and not in forms, her holi-  
ness; —  
For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did dis-  
pense  
Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence  
Was needful round men thirsting to trans-  
gress; —  
For Faith, more perfect still, with which the  
Lord  
Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth  
Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill  
The temples of their hearts who, with his  
word  
Informed, were resolute to do his will,  
And worship him in spirit and in truth.

XXXI

## EDWARD VI

1821. 1822

"SWEET is the holiness of Youth" — so felt  
Time-honoured Chaucer speaking through  
that Lay  
By which the Prioress beguiled the way,  
And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did  
melt.  
Hadst thou, loved Bard ! whose spirit often  
dwelt  
In the clear land of vision, but foreseen  
King, child, and seraph, blended in the mien  
Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt  
In meek and simple infancy, what joy  
For universal Christendom had thrilled

Thy heart ! what hopes inspired thy genius,  
skilled

(O great Precursor, genuine morning Star)  
The lucid shafts of reason to employ,  
Piercing the Papal darkness from afar !

## XXXII

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR  
THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT

1821. 1822

THE tears of man in various measure gush  
From various sources; gently overflow  
From blissful transport some — from clefts  
of woe

Some with ungovernable impulse rush;  
And some, coëval with the earliest blush  
Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show  
Their pearly lustre — coming but to go;  
And some break forth when others' sorrows  
crush

The sympathising heart. Nor these, nor yet  
The noblest drops to admiration known,  
To gratitude, to injuries forgiven —  
Claim Heaven's regard like waters that have  
wet

The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs  
driven

To pen the mandates nature doth disown.

## XXXIII

REVIVAL OF POPERY

1821. 1827

THE saintly Youth has ceased to rule, dis-  
crowned

By unrelenting Death. O People keen  
For change, to whom the new looks always  
green !

Rejoicing did they cast upon the ground  
Their Gods of wood and stone; and, at the  
sound

Of counter-proclamation, now are seen  
(Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen !)  
Lifting them up, the worship to confound  
Of the Most High. Again do they invoke  
The Creature, to the Creature glory give;  
Again with frankincense the altars smoke  
Like those the Heathen served; and mass  
is sung;

And prayer, man's rational prerogative,  
Runs through blind channels of an unknown  
tongue.

## XXXIV

LATIMER AND RIDLEY

1821. 1827

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled !  
See Latimer and Ridley in the night  
Of Faith stand coupled for a common flight !  
One (like those prophets whom God sent of  
old)

Transfigured, from this kindling hath fore-  
told

A torch of inextinguishable light;  
The Other gains a confidence as bold;  
And thus they foil their enemy's despoite.  
The penal instruments, the shows of crime,  
Are glorified while this once-mitred pair  
Of saintly Friends the "murderer's chain  
partake,

Corded, and burning at the social stake :"  
Earth never witnessed object more sublime  
In constancy, in fellowship more fair !

## XXXV

CRANMER

1821. 1822

OUTSTRETCHING flameward his upbraided  
hand

(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat  
Of judgment such presumptuous doom re-  
peat !)

Amid the shuddering throng doth Cranmer  
stand;

Firm as the stake to which with iron band  
His frame is tied; firm from the naked feet  
To the bare head. The victory is complete;  
The shrouded Body to the Soul's command  
Answers with more than Indian fortitude,  
Through all her nerves with finer sense en-  
dued,

Till breath departs in blissful aspiration:  
Then, 'mid the ghastly ruins of the fire,  
Behold the unalterable heart entire,  
Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous  
attestation !

## XXXVI

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF  
THE REFORMATION

1821. 1822

Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of  
light,

Our mortal ken ! Inspire a perfect trust

(While we look round) that Heaven's decrees are just:

Which few can hold committed to a fight  
That shows, ev'n on its better side, the might  
Of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,  
'Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,  
Which showers of blood seem rather to incite  
Than to allay. Anathemas are hurled  
From both sides; veteran thunders (the  
brute test

Of truth) are met by fulminations new —  
Tartarean flags are caught at, and unfurled —  
Friends strike at friends — the flying shall  
pursue —

And Victory sickens, ignorant where to rest!

XXXVII

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE

1821. 1822

SCATTERING, like birds escaped the fowler's  
net,

Some seek with timely flight a foreign  
strand;

Most happy, re-assembled in a land  
By dauntless Luther freed, could they forget  
Their Country's woes. But scarcely have  
they met,

Partners in faith, and brothers in distress,  
Free to pour forth their common thankfulness,

Ere hope declines: — their union is beset  
With speculative notions rashly sown,  
Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poisonous  
weeds;

Their forms are broken staves; their passions,  
steeds

That master them. How enviably blest  
Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone  
The peace of God within his single breast!

XXXVIII

ELIZABETH

1821. 1822

HAIL, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious  
bar

Triumphant, snatched from many a  
treacherous wile!

All hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle  
Hath blest, respiring from that dismal war  
Stilled by thy voice! But quickly from  
afar

Defiance breathes with more malignant aim;  
And alien storms with home-bred ferments  
claim

Portentous fellowship. Her silver car,  
By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly  
on;

Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint  
Emerging pure, and seemingly more bright:  
Ah! wherefore yields it to a foul constraint  
Black as the clouds its beams dispersed,  
while shone,

By men and angels blest, the glorious light?

XXXIX

EMINENT REFORMERS

1821. 1822

ME THINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest  
soil.

Light as a buoyant bark from wave to wave,  
Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL gave  
To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style  
The gift exalting, and with playful smile:  
For thus equipped, and bearing on his head  
The Donor's farewell blessing, can he dread  
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of  
toil? —

More sweet than odours caught by him who  
sails

Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,  
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,  
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,  
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gales  
From fields where good men walk, or bowers  
wherein they rest.

XL

THE SAME

1821. 1822

HOLY and heavenly Spirits as they are,  
Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,  
With what entire affection do they prize  
Their Church reformed! labouring with  
earnest care

To baffle all that may her strength impair;  
That Church, the unperverted Gospel's seat;  
In their afflictions a divine retreat;  
Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest  
prayer! —

The truth exploring with an equal mind,  
In doctrine and communion they have  
sought

Firmly between the two extremes to steer;  
But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot —  
To trace right courses for the stubborn  
blind,  
And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

## XLI

## DISTRACTIONS

1821. 1822

MEN, who have ceased to reverence, soon  
defy,  
Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed,  
and split  
With morbid restlessness; — the ecstatic fit  
Spreads wide; though special mysteries  
multiply,  
*The Saints must govern*, is their common cry;  
And so they labour, deeming Holy Writ  
Disgraced by aught that seems content to  
sit  
Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.  
The Romanist exults; fresh hope he draws  
From the confusion, craftily incites  
The overweening, personates the mad —  
To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause:  
Totters the Throne; the new-born Church  
is sad,  
For every wave against her peace unites.

## XLII

## GUNPOWDER PLOT

1821. 1822

FEAR hath a hundred eyes that all agree  
To plague her beating heart; and there is  
one  
(Nor illest that!) which holds communion  
With things that were not, yet were *meant*  
to be.  
Aghast within its gloomy cavity  
That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done  
Crimes that might stop the motion of the  
sun)  
Beholds the horrible catastrophe  
Of an assembled Senate unredeemed  
From subterraneous Treason's darkling  
power:  
Merciless act of sorrow infinite!  
Worse than the product of that dismal night,  
When gushing, copious as a thunder-shower,  
The blood of Huguenots through Paris  
streamed.

## XLIII

## ILLUSTRATION

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF  
THE RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN

1821. 1822

THE Virgin Mountain, wearing like a Queen  
A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,  
Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below  
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene  
Can link with desolation. Smooth and  
green,  
And seeming, at a little distance, slow,  
The waters of the Rhine; but on they go  
Fretting and whitening, keener and more  
keen;  
Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,  
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils  
breathe  
Blasts of tempestuous smoke — wherewith  
he tries  
To hide himself, but only magnifies;  
And doth in more conspicuous torment  
writhe,  
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

## XLIV

TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST

1821. 1822

EVEN such the contrast that, where'er we  
move,  
To the mind's eye Religion doth present;  
Now with her own deep quietness con-  
tent;  
Then, like the mountain, thundering from  
above  
Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove  
And the Land's humblest comforts. Now  
her mood  
Recalls the transformation of the flood,  
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain re-  
prove;  
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess  
Of headstrong will! Can this be Piety?  
No — some fierce Maniac hath usurped her  
name;  
And scourges England struggling to be  
free;  
Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilder-  
ness!  
Her blessings cursed — her glory turned to  
shame!

## XLV

## LAUD

1821. 1822

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to spare,  
An old weak Man for vengeance thrown  
aside,

Laud, "in the painful art of dying" tried,  
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare  
Whose heart still flutters, though his wings  
forbear

To stir in useless struggle) hath relied  
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,

And in his prison breathes celestial air.  
Why tarries then thy chariot? Wherefore  
stay.

O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant  
wheels,  
Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey

(What time a State with maddening faction  
reels)

The Saint or Patriot to the world that  
heals

All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

## XLVI

## AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND

1821. 1822

HARP! could'st thou venture, on thy boldest  
string,

The faintest note to echo which the blast  
Caught from the hand of Moses as it passed  
O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd  
king,

Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing  
Of dread Jehovah; then, should wood and  
waste

Hear also of that name, and mercy cast  
Off to the mountains, like a covering  
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, oh!

weep,  
Weep with the good, beholding King and  
Priest

Despised by that stern God to whom they  
raise

Their suppliant hands; but holy is the  
feast

He keepeth; like the firmament his ways:  
His statutes like the chambers of the  
deep.

## PART III

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE  
PRESENT TIMES

1821. 1822

When I came to this part of the series I had the dream described in this Sonnet. The figure was that of my daughter, and the whole passed exactly as here represented. The Sonnet was composed on the middle road leading from Grasmere to Ambleside: it was begun as I left the last house of the vale, and finished, word for word as it now stands, before I came in view of Rydal. I wish I could say the same of the five or six hundred I have written: most of them were frequently retouched in the course of composition, and, not a few, laboriously.

I have only further to observe that the intended Church which prompted these Sonnets was erected on Coleorton Moor towards the centre of a very populous parish between three and four miles from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, on the road to Loughborough, and has proved, I believe, a great benefit to the neighbourhood.

## I

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid  
Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,  
Whose fondly-overhanging canopy  
Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.  
No Spirit was she; *that* my heart betrayed,  
For she was one I loved exceedingly;  
But while I gazed in tender reverie  
(Or was it sleep that with my Fancy  
played?)

The bright corporeal presence — form and  
face —

Remaining still distinct grew thin and rare,  
Like sunny mist; — at length the golden hair,  
Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keeping  
pace

Each with the other in a lingering race  
Of dissolution, melted into air.

## II

## PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES

1821. 1822

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision spake  
Fear to my Soul, and sadness which might  
seem

Wholly dis severed from our present theme;  
Yet, my beloved Country! I partake  
Of kindred agitations for thy sake;

Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight dream;  
 Thy glory meets me with the earliest beam  
 Of light, which tells that Morning is awake.  
 If aught impair thy beauty or destroy,  
 Or but forebode destruction, I deplore  
 With filial love the sad vicissitude;  
 If thou hast fallen, and righteous Heaven  
     restore  
 The prostrate, then my spring-time is re-  
     newed,  
 And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

## III

CHARLES THE SECOND

1821. 1822

Who comes — with rapture greeted, and  
     caressed  
 With frantic love — his kingdom to regain ?  
 Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain  
 Received, and fostered in her iron breast:  
 For all she taught of hardest and of best,  
 Or would have taught, by discipline of pain  
 And long privation, now dissolves again,  
 Or is remembered only to give zest  
 To wantonness. — Away, Circean revels !  
 But for what gain ? if England soon must  
     sink  
 Into a gulf which all distinction levels —  
 That bigotry may swallow the good name,  
 And, with that draught, the life-blood:  
     misery, shame,  
 By Poets loathed; from which Historians  
     shrink !

## IV

LATITUDINARIANISM

1821. 1822

YET Truth is keenly sought for, and the  
     wind  
 Charged with rich words poured out in  
     thought's defence;  
 Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,  
 Or a Platonic Piety confined  
 To the sole temple of the inward mind;  
 And One there is who builds immortal lays,  
 Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,  
 Darkness before and danger's voice behind;  
 Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel  
 Sad thoughts; for from above the starry  
     sphere  
 Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear;  
 And the pure spirit of celestial light

Shines through his soul — “ that he may see  
     and tell  
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.”

## V

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES

1821. 1822

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky  
 So fair as these. The feather, whence the  
     pen  
 Was shaped that traced the lives of these  
     good men,  
 Dropped from an Angel's wing. With  
     moistened eye  
 We read of faith and purest charity  
 In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen:  
 Oh could we copy their mild virtues, then  
 What joy to live, what blessedness to die !  
 Methinks their very names shine still and  
     bright;  
 Apart — like glow-worms on a summer  
     night;  
 Or lonely tapers when from far they fling  
 A guiding ray; or seen — like stars on high,  
 Satellites burning in a lucid ring  
 Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

## VI

CLERICAL INTEGRITY

1821. 1822

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject  
 Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous  
     day  
 Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey  
 To poverty, and grief, and disrespect.  
 And some to want — as if by tempests  
     wrecked  
 On a wild coast — how destitute ! did They  
 Feel not that Conscience never can be-  
     tray,  
 That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect.  
 Their altars they forego, their homes they  
     quit,  
 Fields which they love, and paths they  
     daily trod,  
 And cast the future upon Providence;  
 As men the dictate of whose inward sense  
 Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving  
     wit  
 Lures not from what they deem the cause  
     of God.

## VII

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH  
COVENANTERS

1821. 1827

WHEN Alpine Vales threw forth a suppliant  
cry,

The Majesty of England interposed  
And the sword stopped; the bleeding  
wounds were closed;

And Faith preserved her ancient purity.  
How little boots that precedent of good,  
Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,  
For England's shame, O Sister Realm !  
from wood,

Mountain, and moor, and crowded street,  
where lie

The headless martyrs of the Covenant,  
Slain by Compatriot-protestants that draw  
From councils senseless as intolerant  
Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-  
law;

But who would force the Soul, tilts with a  
straw

Against a Champion cased in adamant.

## VIII

## ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS

1821. 1822

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands sent,  
Shatters the air, and troubles tower and  
spire;

For Justice hath absolved the innocent,  
And Tyranny is balked of her desire:

Up, down, the busy Thames — rapid as fire  
Coursing a train of gunpowder — it went,  
And transport finds in every street a vent,  
Till the whole City rings like one vast quire.  
The Fathers urge the People to be still,  
With outstretched hands and earnest speech  
— in vain !

Yea, many, haply wont to entertain  
Small reverence for the mitre's offices,  
And to Religion's self no friendly will,  
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

## IX

## WILLIAM THE THIRD

1821. 1822

CALM as an under-current, strong to draw  
Millions of waves into itself, and run,

From sea to sea, impervious to the sun  
And ploughing storm, the spirit of Nassau  
Swerves not, (how blest if by religious awe  
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend  
With the wide world's commotions) from  
its end

Swerves not — diverted by a casual law.  
Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope ?  
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy;  
And, while he marches on with stedfast  
hope,

Conqueror beloved ! expected anxiously !  
The vacillating Bondman of the Pope  
Shrinks from the verdict of his stedfast  
eye.

## X

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS  
LIBERTY

1821. 1822

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget  
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled !  
How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his  
head,

And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet;  
But these had fallen for profitless regret  
Had not thy holy Church her champions  
bred,

And claims from other worlds inspirited  
The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet  
(Grave this within thy heart !) if spiritual  
things

Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,  
Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,  
However hardly won or justly dear:

What came from heaven to heaven by  
nature clings,  
And, if dissevered thence, its course is  
short.

## XI

## SACHEVEREL

1821. 1827

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell  
Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained  
In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or feigned,  
Spread through all ranks; and lo ! the  
Sentinel

Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,  
Stands at the Bar, absolved by female eyes  
Mingling their glances with grave flatteries  
Lavished on *Him* — that England may  
rebel

Against her ancient virtue. **HIGH** and  
 Low,  
 Watchwords of Party, on all tongues are  
 rife;  
 As if a Church, though sprung from heaven,  
 must owe  
 To opposites and fierce extremes her life, —  
 Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow  
 Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife.

## XII

1821. 1827

Down a swift Stream, thus far, a bold  
 design  
 Have we pursued, with livelier stir of heart  
 Than his who sees, borne forward by the  
 Rhine,  
 The living landscapes greet him, and de-  
 part;  
 Sees spires fast sinking — up again to start!  
 And strives the towers to number, that  
 recline  
 O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon  
 line  
 Striding with shattered crests his eye  
 athwart,  
 So have we hurried on with troubled plea-  
 sure:  
 Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream  
 That slackens, and spreads wide a watery  
 gleam,  
 We, nothing loth a lingering course to  
 measure,  
 May gather up our thoughts, and mark at  
 leisure  
 How widely spread the interests of our  
 theme.

## XIII

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN  
 AMERICA

## I. THE PILGRIM FATHERS

1842. 1845

WELL worthy to be magnified are they  
 Who, with sad hearts, of friends and  
 country took  
 A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,  
 And hallowed ground in which their fathers  
 lay;  
 Then to the new-found World explored  
 their way,

That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to  
 brook  
 Ritual restraints, within some sheltering  
 nook  
 Her Lord might worship and his word obey  
 In freedom. Men they were who could not  
 bend;  
 Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for  
 guide  
 A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified;  
 Blest while their Spirits from the woods  
 ascend  
 Along a Galaxy that knows no end,  
 But in His glory who for Simmers died.

## XIV

## II. CONTINUED

1842. 1845

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they fled  
 To Wilds where both were utterly unknown;  
 But not to them had Providence foreshown  
 What benefits are missed, what evils bred,  
 In worship neither raised nor limited  
 Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant  
 shore,  
 For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led  
 Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of  
 yore,  
 Led by her own free choice. So Truth  
 and Love  
 By Conscience governed do their steps re-  
 trace. —  
 Fathers! your Virtues, such the power of  
 grace,  
 Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.  
 Transcendent over time, unbound by place,  
 Concord and Charity in circles move.

## XV

III. CONCLUDED. — AMERICAN  
 EPISCOPACY

1842. 1845

PATRIOTS informed with Apostolic light  
 Were they, who, when their Country had  
 been freed,  
 Bowing with reverence to the ancient creed,  
 Fixed on the frame of England's Church  
 their sight,  
 And strove in filial love to reunite  
 What force had severed. Thence they  
 fetched the seed



Of Christian unity, and won a meed  
 Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O  
     saintly WHITE,  
 Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,  
 Remotest lands and unborn times shall turn,  
 Whether they would restore or build — to  
     Thee,  
 As one who rightly taught how zeal should  
     burn,  
 As one who drew from out Faith's holiest  
     urn  
 The purest stream of patient Energy.

## XVI

1821. 1845

BISHOPS and Priests, blessèd are ye, if deep  
 (As yours above all offices is high),  
 Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie;  
 Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and  
     keep  
 From wolves your portion of his chosen  
     sheep:  
 Labouring as ever in your Master's sight,  
 Making your hardest task your best de-  
     light,  
 What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall  
     reap! —  
 But, in the solemn Office which ye sought  
 And undertook premonished, if unsound  
 Your practice prove, faithless though but in  
     thought,  
 Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf pro-  
     found  
 Awaits you then, if they were rightly taught  
 Who framed the Ordinance by your lives  
     disowned!

## XVII

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

1821. 1822

As star that shines dependent upon star  
 Is to the sky while we look up and love;  
 As to the deep fair ships which though they  
     move  
 Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from  
     afar;  
 As to the sandy desert fountains are,  
 With palm-groves shaded at wide inter-  
     vals,  
 Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native  
     falls,

Of roving tired or desultory war —  
 Such to this British Isle her christian  
     Fanes,  
 Each linked to each for kindred services;  
 Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glitter-  
     ing vanes  
 Far-kemmed, her Chapels lurking among  
     trees,  
 Where a few villagers on bended knees  
 Find solace which a busy world disdains.

## XVIII

## PASTORAL CHARACTER

1821. 1822

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,  
 And a refined rusticity, belong  
 To the neat mansion, where, his flock among,  
 The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful  
     Lord.  
 Though meek and patient as a sheathed  
     sword;  
 Though pride's least lurking thought appear  
     a wrong  
 To human kind; though peace be on his  
     tongue.  
 Gentleness in his heart — can earth afford  
 Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,  
 As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,  
 He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;  
 Conjures, implores, and labours all he  
     can  
 For re-subjecting to divine command  
 The stubborn spirit of rebellious man?

## XIX

## THE LITURGY

1821. 1822

YES, if the intensities of hope and fear  
 Attract us still, and passionate exercise  
 Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies  
 Distinct with signs, through which in set  
     career,  
 As through a zodiac, moves the ritual  
     year  
 Of England's Church; stupendous mys-  
     teries!  
 Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,  
 As he approaches them, with solemn  
     cheer.  
 Upon that circle traced from sacred story  
 We only dare to cast a transient glance,

Trusting in hope that Others may advance  
With mind intent upon the King of Glory,  
From his mild advent till his countenance  
Shall dissipate the seas and mountains hoary.

XX

BAPTISM

1821. 1827

DEAR be the Church, that, watching o'er  
the needs  
Of Infancy, provides a timely shower  
Whose virtue changes to a christian Flower  
A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of  
weeds! —  
Fitliest beneath the sacred roof proceeds  
The ministration; while parental Love  
Looks on, and Grace descendeth from  
above  
As the high service pledges now, now  
pleads.  
There, should vain thoughts outspread their  
wings and fly  
To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,  
The tombs — which hear and answer that  
brief cry,  
The Infant's notice of his second birth —  
Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy  
With what man hopes from Heaven, yet  
fears from Earth.

XXI

SPONSORS

1821. 1822

FATHER! — to God himself we cannot give  
A holier name! then lightly do not bear  
Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual  
care  
Be duly mindful: still more sensitive  
Do Thou, in truth a second Mother, strive  
Against disheartening custom, that by Thee  
Watched, and with love and pious industry  
Tended at need, the adopted Plant may  
thrive  
For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure  
This Ordinance, whether loss it would sup-  
ply,  
Prevent omission, help deficiency,  
Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.  
Shame if the consecrated Vow be found  
An idle form, the Word an empty sound!

XXII

CATECHISING

1821. 1832

FROM Little down to Least, in due degree,  
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,  
Each with a vernal posy at his breast,  
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!  
With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,  
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears  
betrayed;  
And some a bold unerring answer made:  
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,  
Beloved Mother! Thou whose happy hand  
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful  
tie:  
Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible command  
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-ap-  
pear:  
O lost too early for the frequent tear,  
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

XXIII

CONFIRMATION

1821. 1827

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill and  
dale,  
With holiday delight on every brow:  
'Tis passed away; far other thoughts pre-  
vail;  
For they are taking the baptismal Vow  
Upon their conscious selves; their own lips  
speak  
The solemn promise. Strongest sinews fail,  
And many a blooming, many a lovely, cheek  
Under the holy fear of God turns pale;  
While on each head his lawn-robed Servant  
lays  
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals  
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will raise  
Their feeble Souls; and bear with *his* regrets,  
Who, looking round the fair assemblage,  
feels  
That ere the Sun goes down their childhood  
sets.

XXIV

CONFIRMATION CONTINUED

1821. 1827

I SAW a Mother's eye intensely bent  
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;

In and for whom the pious Mother felt  
Things that we judge of by a light too  
faint:

Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse,  
or Saint !

Tell what rushed in, from what she was re-  
lieved —

Then, when her Child the hallowing touch  
received,

And such vibration through the Mother  
went

That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams  
appear ?

Opened a vision of that blissful place  
Where dwells a Sister-child ? And was  
power given

Part of her lost One's glory back to trace  
Even to this Rite ? For thus *She* knelt,  
and, ere

The summer-leaf had faded, passed to  
Heaven.

## XXV

## SACRAMENT

1821. 1827

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be  
tied;

One duty more, last stage of this ascent,  
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacrament !

The Offspring, haply, at the Parent's side;  
But not till They, with all that do abide

In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to  
laud

And magnify the glorious name of God,  
Fountain of grace, whose Son for sinners  
died.

Ye, who have duly weighed the summons,  
pause

No longer; ye, whom to the saving rite  
The Altar calls, come early under laws

That can secure for you a path of light  
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor dread  
its weight)

Armour divine, and conquer in your cause !

## XXVI

## THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

1821. 1845

THE Vested Priest before the Altar stands;  
Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in  
sight

Of God and chosen friends, your troth to  
plight

With the symbolic ring, and willing hands  
Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the bands  
O Father ! — to the Espoused thy blessing  
give,

That mutually assisted they may live  
Obedient, as here taught, to thy commands.

So prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow  
“ The which would endless matrimony  
make ; ”

Union that shadows forth and doth partake  
A mystery potent human love to endow

With heavenly, each more prized for the  
other's sake ;

Weep not, meek Bride ! uplift thy timid  
brow.

## XXVII

## THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH

1821. 1845

WOMAN ! the Power who left his throne on  
high,

And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we  
wear,

The Power that thro' the straits of Infancy  
Did pass dependent on maternal care,

His own humanity with Thee will share,  
Pleased with the thanks that in his People's  
eye

Thou offerest up for safe Delivery  
From Childbirth's perilous throes. And  
should the Heir

Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined  
To courses fit to make a mother rue

That ever he was born, a glance of mind  
Cast upon this observance may renew

A better will; and, in the imagined view  
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find.

## XXVIII

## VISITATION OF THE SICK

1821. 1845

THE Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal;  
Glad music ! yet there be that, worn with  
pain

And sickness, listen where they long have  
lain,

In sadness listen. With maternal zeal  
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to  
kneel

Beside the afflicted; to sustain with prayer,

And soothe the heart confession hath laid  
bare —

That pardon, from God's throne, may set its  
seal

On a true Penitent. When breath departs  
From one disburthened so, so comforted,  
His Spirit Angels greet; and ours be hope  
That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-bed,  
Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope  
With a bad world, and foil the Tempter's  
arts.

XXIX

#### THE COMMINATION SERVICE

1821. 1845

SHUN not this Rite, neglected, yea abhorred,  
By some of unreflecting mind, as calling  
Man to curse man, (thought monstrous and  
appalling.)

Go thou and hear the threatenings of the  
LORD;

Listening within his Temple see his sword  
Unsheathed in wrath to strike the offender's  
head,

Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,  
Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.

Two aspects bears Truth needful for salva-  
tion;

Who knows not that? — yet would this  
delicate age

Look only on the Gospel's brighter page:  
Let light and dark duly our thoughts em-  
ploy;

So shall the fearful words of Commination  
Yield timely fruit of peace and love and  
joy.

XXX

#### FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA

1821. 1845

To kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor  
Gives holier invitation than the deck  
Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from  
Wreck

(When all that Man could do availed no  
more)

By him who raised the Tempest and re-  
strains:

Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour  
Forth for his mercy, as the Church ordains,  
Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will they im-  
plore

In vain who, for a rightful cause, give breath

To words the Church prescribes, aiding the  
lip

For the heart's sake, ere ship with hostile  
ship

Encounters, armed for work of pain and  
death.

Suppliants! the God to whom your cause  
ye trust

Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

XXXI

#### FUNERAL SERVICE

1821. 1845

From the Baptismal hour, thro weal and  
woe,

The Church extends her care to thought  
and deed;

Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,  
The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.

Blest Rite for him who hears in faith, "I  
know

That my Redeemer liveth," — hears each  
word

That follows — striking on some kindred  
chord

Deep in the thankful heart; — yet tears will  
flow.

Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,  
Grows green, and is cut down and wither-  
eth

Ere nightfall — truth that well may claim  
a sigh,

Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn  
At Jesu's bidding. We rejoice, "O Death,  
Where is thy Sting? — O Grave, where is  
thy Victory?"

XXXII

#### RURAL CEREMONY

1821. 1822

CLOSING the sacred Book which long has  
fed

Our meditations, give we to a day  
Of annual joy one tributary lay;

This day, when, forth by rustic music led,  
The village Children, while the sky is red

With evening lights, advance in long array  
Through the still churchyard, each with

garland gay,

That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the  
head

Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-  
 door,  
 Charged with these offerings which their  
 fathers bore  
 For decoration in the Papal time,  
 The innocent procession softly moves: —  
 The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's  
 pure clime,  
 And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves !

XXXIII

REGRETS

1821. 1822

WOULD that our scrupulous Sires had dared  
 to leave  
 Less scanty measure of those graceful rites  
 And usages, whose due return invites  
 A stir of mind too natural to deceive;  
 Giving to Memory help when she would  
 weave  
 A crown for Hope ! — I dread the boasted  
 lights  
 That all too often are but fiery blights,  
 Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.  
 Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort  
 bring,  
 The counter Spirit found in some gay  
 church  
 Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch  
 In which the linnet or the thrush might  
 sing,  
 Merry and loud and safe from prying search,  
 Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XXXIV

MUTABILITY

1821. 1822

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
 And sink from high to low, along a scale  
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not  
 fail;  
 A musical but melancholy chime,  
 Which they can hear who meddle not with  
 crime,  
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
 Truth fails not; but her outward forms that  
 bear  
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain  
 And is no more; drop like the tower sub-  
 lime

Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
 His crown of weeds, but could not even  
 sustain  
 Some casual shout that broke the silent  
 air,  
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

XXXV

OLD ABBEYS

1821. 1822

MONASTIC Domes ! following my down-  
 ward way,  
 Untouched by due regret I marked your  
 fall !  
 Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all  
 Dispose to judgments temperate as we  
 lay  
 On our past selves in life's declining day:  
 For as, by discipline of Time made wise,  
 We learn to tolerate the infirmities  
 And faults of others — gently as he may,  
 So with our own the mild Instructor deals,  
 Teaching us to forget them or forgive.  
 Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill  
 Why should we break Time's charitable  
 seals ?  
 Once ye were holy, ye are holy still;  
 Your spirit freely let me drink, and live !

XXXVI

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY

1821. 1827

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs of  
 France  
 Are shattered into dust; and self-exiled  
 From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled,  
 Wander the Ministers of God, as chance  
 Opens a way for life, or consonance  
 Of faith invites. More welcome to no land  
 The fugitives than to the British strand,  
 Where priest and layman with the vigilance  
 Of true compassion greet them. Creed and  
 test  
 Vanish before the unreserved embrace  
 Of catholic humanity: — distress  
 They came, — and, while the moral tempest  
 rours  
 Throughout the Country they have left, our  
 shores  
 Give to their Faith a fearless resting-  
 place.

XXXVII  
CONGRATULATION

1821. 1822

THUS all things lead to Charity secured  
By THEM who blessed the soft and happy  
gale  
That landward urged the great Deliverer's  
sail,  
Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored !  
Propitious hour ! — had we, like them, en-  
dured  
Sore stress of apprehension, with a mind  
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse de-  
signed,  
From month to month trembling and un-  
assured,  
How had we then rejoiced ! But we have  
felt,  
As a loved substance, their futurity :  
Good, which they dared not hope for, we  
have seen ;  
A State whose generous will through earth  
is dealt ;  
A State — which, balancing herself be-  
tween  
Licence and slavish order, dares be free.

XXXVIII  
NEW CHURCHES

1821. 1822

BUT liberty, and triumphs on the Main,  
And laurelled armies, not to be withstood —  
What serve they ? if, on transitory good  
Intent, and sedulous of abject gain,  
The State (ah, surely not preserved in  
vain !)  
Forbear to shape due channels which the  
Flood  
Of sacred truth may enter — till it brood  
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian  
plain  
The all-sustaining Nile. No more — the  
time  
Is conscious of her want ; through England's  
bounds,  
In rival haste, the wished-for Temples rise !  
I hear their sabbath bells' harmonious  
chime  
Flout on the breeze — the heavenliest of all  
sounds  
That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies !

XXXIX  
CHURCH TO BE ERECTED

1821. 1822

BE this the chosen site ; the virgin sod,  
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,  
Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive  
The corner-stone from hands that build to  
God.  
Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to the rod  
Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully ;  
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,  
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode  
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid  
this band  
Of daisies, shepherds sate of yore and wove  
May-garlands, there let the holy altar stand  
For kneeling adoration ; — while — above,  
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic Dove,  
That shall protect from blasphemy the  
Land.

XL  
CONTINUED

1821. 1822

MINE ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued,  
Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,  
When each pale brow to dread hosannas  
bowed  
While clouds of incense mounting veiled  
the rood,  
That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly  
viewed  
Through Alpine vapours. Such appalling rite  
Our Church prepares not, trusting to the  
night  
Of simple truth with grace divine imbued ;  
Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,  
Like men ashamed : the Sun with his first  
smile  
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low  
Pile :  
And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn  
Shall wooingly embrace it ; and green moss  
Creep round its arms through centuries un-  
born.

XLI  
NEW CHURCHYARD

1821. 1822

THE encircling ground, in native turf ar-  
rayed,  
Is now by solemn consecration given

To social interests, and to favouring  
 Heaven;  
 And where the rugged colts their gambols  
 played,  
 And wild deer bounded through the forest  
 glade,  
 Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,  
 Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and  
 even;  
 And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's spade  
 Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture  
 small,  
 But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!  
 Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and  
 flow; —  
 The spousal trembling, and the "dust to  
 dust,"  
 The prayers, the contrite struggle, and the  
 trust  
 That to the Almighty Father looks through  
 all.

## XLII

## CATHEDRALS, ETC.

1821. 1822

OPEN your gates, ye everlasting Piles!  
 Types of the spiritual Church which God  
 hath reared;  
 Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed sward  
 And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous  
 aisles  
 To kneel, or thrid your intricate defiles,  
 Or down the nave to pace in motion slow;  
 Watching, with upward eye, the tall tower  
 grow  
 And mount, at every step, with living wiles  
 Instinct -- to rouse the heart and lead the  
 will  
 By a bright ladder to the world above.  
 Open your gates, ye Monuments of love  
 Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign hill!  
 Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose splen-  
 dours cheer  
 Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

## XLIII

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,  
 CAMBRIDGE

1821. 1822

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
 planned —  
 Albeit labouring for a scanty band

Of white robed Scholars only — this im-  
 mense  
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence!  
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects  
 the lore  
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the  
 sense  
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching  
 roof  
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand  
 cells,  
 Where light and shade repose, where music  
 dwells  
 Linger — and wandering on as loth to  
 die;  
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yield-  
 eth proof  
 That they were born for immortality.

## XLIV

## THE SAME

1821. 1822

WHAT awful perspective! while from our  
 sight  
 With gradual stealth the lateral windows  
 hide  
 Their Portraitures, their stone-work glim-  
 mers, dyed  
 In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.  
 Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremité,  
 Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,  
 Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,  
 Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night! —  
 But, from the arms of silence — list! O list!  
 The music bursteth into second life;  
 The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
 By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;  
 Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the  
 eye  
 Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

## XLV

## CONTINUED

1821. 1822

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home  
 Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours  
 of fear  
 Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here;  
 Or through the aisles of Westminster to  
 roam:

Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing  
foam  
Melts, if it cross the threshold; where the  
wreath  
Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my path  
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like  
dome  
Hath typified by reach of daring art  
Infinity's embrace; whose guardian crest,  
The silent Cross, among the stars shall  
spread  
As now, when She hath also seen her breast  
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part  
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

XLVI  
EJACULATION  
1821. 1822

GLORY to God! and to the Power who came  
In filial duty, clothed with love divine,  
That made his human tabernacle shine  
Like Ocean burning with purpleal flame;  
Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its  
name  
From roseate hues, far kenne'd at morn and  
even  
In hours of peace, or when the storm is  
driven  
Along the nether region's rugged frame!  
Earth prompts — Heaven urges; let us seek  
the light,

MEMORY  
1823. 1827

A PEN — to register; a key —  
That winds through secret wards,  
Are well assigned to Memory  
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given  
A Pencil to her hand;  
That, softening objects, sometimes even  
Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smooths foregone distress, the  
lines  
Of lingering care subdues,  
Long-vanished happiness refines,  
And clothes in brighter hues;

Studious of that pure intercourse begun  
When first our infant brows their lustre won;  
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more  
bright  
From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,  
At the approach of all-involving night.

XLVII  
CONCLUSION  
1821. 1822

WHY sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,  
Coil within coil, at noon-tide? For the  
WORD  
Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith ex-  
plored,  
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall  
unfold  
His drowsy rings. Look forth! — that  
Stream behold,  
THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we have  
passed  
Floating at ease while nations have effaced  
Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold  
Long lines of mighty Kings — look forth,  
my Soul!  
(Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust)  
The living Waters, less and less by guilt  
Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,  
Till they have reached the eternal City —  
built  
For the perfected Spirit of the just!

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works  
Those Spectres to dilate  
That startle Conscience, as she lurks  
Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,  
In purity were such,  
That not an image of the past  
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look  
Upon a soothing scene,  
Age steal to his allotted nook  
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,  
In frosty moonlight glistening;  
Or mountain rivers, where they creep  
Along a channel smooth and deep,  
To their own far-off murmurs listening.



## TO THE LADY FLEMING

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING  
FOR THE ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL,  
WESTMORELAND

1823. 1827

After thanking Lady Fleming in prose for the service she had done to her neighbourhood by erecting this Chapel, I have nothing to say beyond the expression of regret that the architect did not furnish an elevation better suited to the site in a narrow mountain-pass, and, what is of more consequence, better constructed in the interior for the purposes of worship. It has no chancel; the altar is unbecomingly confined; the pews are so narrow as to preclude the possibility of kneeling with comfort; there is no vestry; and what ought to have been first mentioned, the font, instead of standing at its proper place at the entrance, is thrust into the farther end of a pew. When these defects shall be pointed out to the munificent Patroness, they will, it is hoped, be corrected.

## I

BLEST is this Isle — our native Land;  
Where battlement and moated gate  
Are objects only for the hand  
Of hoary Time to decorate;  
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes  
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,  
No rampart's stern defence require,  
Nought but the heaven-directed spire,  
And steeple tower (with pealing bells  
Far-heard) — our only citadels.

## II

O Lady! from a noble line  
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore  
The spear, yet gave to works divine  
A bounteous help in days of yore  
(As records mouldering in the Dell  
Of Nightshade haply yet may tell);  
Thee kindred aspirations moved  
To build, within a vale beloved,  
For Him upon whose high behests  
All peace depends, all safety rests.

## III

How fondly will the woods embrace  
This daughter of thy pious care,  
Lifting her front with modest grace  
To make a fair recess more fair;  
And to exalt the passing hour;  
Or soothe it with a healing power

Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,  
Before this rugged soil was tilled,  
Or human habitation rose  
To interrupt the deep repose!

30

## IV

Well may the villagers rejoice!  
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,  
Will be a hindrance to the voice  
That would unite in prayer and praise;  
More duly shall wild wandering Youth  
Receive the curb of sacred truth,  
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear  
The Promise, with uplifted ear;  
And all shall welcome the new ray  
Imparted to their sabbath-day.

40

## V

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,  
His fancy cheated — that can see  
A shade upon the future cast,  
Of time's pathetic sanctity;  
Can hear the monitory clock  
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock  
At evening, when the ground beneath  
Is ruffled o'er with cells of death;  
Where happy generations lie,  
Here tutored for eternity.

50

## VI

Lives there a man whose sole delights  
Are trivial pomp and city noise,  
Hardening a heart that loathes or slights  
What every natural heart enjoys?  
Who never caught a noon-tide dream  
From murmur of a running stream;  
Could strip, for aught the prospect  
yields  
To him, their verdure from the fields;  
And take the radiance from the clouds  
In which the sun his setting shrouds.

60

## VII

A soul so pitiably forlorn,  
If such do on this earth abide,  
May season apathy with scorn,  
May turn indifference to pride;  
And still be not unblest — compared  
With him who grovels, self-debarred  
From all that lies within the scope  
Of holy faith and christian hope;  
Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast  
False fires, that others may be lost.

70

VIII

Alas ! that such perverted zeal  
Should spread on Britain's favoured ground !  
That public order, private weal,  
Should e'er have felt or feared a wound  
From champions of the desperate law  
Which from their own blind hearts they  
draw ;

Who tempt their reason to deny  
God, whom their passions dare defy,  
And boast that they alone are free  
Who reach this dire extremity !

80

IX

But turn we from these "bold bad" men ;  
The way, mild Lady ! that hath led  
Down to their "dark opprobrious den,"  
Is all too rough for Thee to tread.  
Softly as morning vapours glide  
Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,  
Should move the tenor of *his* song  
Who means to charity no wrong ;  
Whose offering gladly would accord  
With this day's work, in thought and word.

80

X

Heaven prosper it ! may peace, and love,  
And hope, and consolation, fall,  
Through its meek influence, from above,  
And penetrate the hearts of all ;  
All who, around the hallowed Fane,  
Shall sojourn in this fair domain ;  
Grateful to Thee, while service pure,  
And ancient ordinance, shall endure,  
For opportunity bestowed  
To kneel together, and adore their God !

100

ON THE SAME OCCASION

1823. 1827

Oh ! gather whencesoe'er ye safely may  
The help which slackening Piety requires,  
Nor deem that ho perforce must go astray  
Who treads upon the footmarks of his sires.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but *why* is by few persons *exactly* known ; nor, that the degree of deviation from *due* east often noticeable in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular case, by the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

WHEN in the antique age of bow and spear  
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,

Came ministers of peace, intent to rear  
The Mother Church in yon sequestered vale ;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite  
Resounded with deep swell and solemn close,  
Through unremitting vigils of the night,  
Till from his couch the wished-for Sun up-  
rose.

He rose, and straight — as by divine com-  
mand,

They, who had waited for that sign to trace  
Their work's foundation, gave with careful  
hand

To the high altar its determined place ;

Mindful of Him who in the Orient born  
There lived, and on the cross his life re-  
signed,

And who, from out the regions of the  
morn,

Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge man-  
kind.

So taught *their* creed ; — nor failed the east-  
ern sky,

'Mid these more awful feelings, to infuse  
The sweet and natural hopes that shall not  
die,

Long as the sun his gladsome course renews.

For us hath such prelnsive vigil ceased ;  
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days,  
Our christian altar faithful to the east,  
Whence the tall window drinks the morn-  
ing rays ;

That obvious emblem giving to the eye  
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,  
That symbol of the dayspring from on high,  
Triumphant o'er the darkness of the grave.

"A VOLANT TRIBE OF BARDS  
ON EARTH ARE FOUND"

1823. 1827

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are  
found,

Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round  
them play,

On "coignes of vantage" hang their nests  
of clay ;

How quickly from that æry hold unbound,  
Dust for oblivion ! To the solid ground

Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye;  
 Convinced that there, there only, she can lay  
 Secure foundations. As the year runs  
 round,

Apart she toils within the chosen ring;  
 While the stars shine, or while day's purple  
 eye

Is gently closing with the flowers of spring;  
 Where even the motion of an Angel's wing  
 Would interrupt the intense tranquillity  
 Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

"NOT LOVE, NOT WAR, NOR  
 THE TUMULTUOUS SWELL."

1823. 1827

Nor Love, nor War, nor the tumultuous swell  
 Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,  
 Nor Duty struggling with afflictions  
 strange —

Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell;  
 But where untroubled peace and concord  
 dwell,

There also is the Muse not loth to range,  
 Watching the twilight smoke of cot or  
 grange,

Skyward ascending from a woody dell.  
 Meek aspirations please her, lone endeavour,  
 And sage content, and placid melancholy;  
 She loves to gaze upon a crystal river —  
 Diaphanous because it travels slowly;  
 Soft is the music that would charm for ever;  
 The flower of sweetest smell is shy and  
 lowly.

TO —

1824. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. On Mrs. Words-  
 worth.

LET other bards of angels sing,  
 Bright suns without a spot;  
 But thou art no such perfect thing:  
 Rejoice that thou art not!

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair;  
 So, Mary, let it be  
 If nought in loveliness compare  
 With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,  
 Whose veil is unremoved  
 Till heart with heart in concord beats,  
 And the lover is beloved.

TO —

1824. 1827.

Written at Rydal Mount. To Mrs. W.

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,  
 Full oft our human foresight I deplore;  
 Trembling, through my unworthiness, with  
 fear  
 That friends, by death disjoined, may meet  
 no more!

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,  
 Mix with the day, and cross the hour of rest;  
 While all the future, for thy purer soul,  
 With "sober certainties" of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human ear,  
 Tells that these words thy humbleness of-  
 fend;

Yet bear me up — else faltering in the rear  
 Of a steep march: support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,  
 And Love is dutiful in thought and deed;  
 Through Thee communion with that Love  
 I seek:

The faith Heaven strengthens where *he*  
 moulds the Creed.

"HOW RICH THAT FOREHEAD'S  
 CALM EXPANSE"

1824. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. Mrs. Words-  
 worth's impression is that the Poem was writ-  
 ten at Coleorton: it was certainly suggested by  
 a Print at Coleorton Hall.

How rich that forehead's calm expanse!  
 How bright that heaven-directed glance!  
 — Waft her to glory, winged Powers,  
 Ere sorrow be renewed,  
 And intercourse with mortal hours  
 Bring back a humbler mood!  
 So looked Cecilia when she drew  
 An Angel from his station;  
 So looked; not ceasing to pursue  
 Her tuneful adoration!  
 But hand and voice alike are still;  
 No sound *here* sweeps away the will  
 That gave it birth: in service meek  
 One upright arm sustains the cheek,  
 And one across the bosom lies —  
 That rose, and now forgets to rise,  
 Subdued by breathless harmonies

Of meditative feeling;  
Mute strains from worlds beyond the skies,  
Through the pure light of female eyes,  
Their sanctity revealing !

TO —

1824. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. Prompted by the  
undue importance attached to personal beauty  
by some dear friends of mine.

Look at the fate of summer flowers,  
Which blow at daybreak, droop e'er even-  
song;

And, grieved for their brief date, confess  
that ours,

Measured by what we are and ought to be,  
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee,  
Is not so long !

If human Life do pass away,  
Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,  
If we are creatures of a *winter's* day;  
What space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose  
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing  
rose ?

Not even an hour !

The deepest grove whose foliage hid  
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,  
Could not the entrance of this thought for-  
bid:

O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid !  
Nor rate too high what must so quickly fade,  
So soon be lost.

Then shall love teach some virtuous Youth  
"To draw, out of the object of his eyes,"  
The while on thee they gaze in simple truth,  
Hues more exalted, "a refined Form,"  
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the  
worm,  
And never dies.

## A FLOWER GARDEN

AT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE  
1824. 1827

Planned by my friend, Lady Beaumont, in  
connection with the garden at Coleorton.

TELL me, ye Zephyrs ! that unfold,  
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,

Pinions that fanned the teeming mould  
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,  
Did only softly-stealing hours  
There close the peaceful lives of flowers ?

Say, when the *moving* creatures saw  
All kinds commingled without fear,  
Prevailed a like indulgent law  
For the still growths that prosper here ? 10  
Did wanton fawn and kid forbear  
The half-blown rose, the lily spare ?

Or peeped they often from their beds  
And prematurely disappeared,  
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads  
A bosom to the sun endeared ?  
If such their harsh untimely doom,  
It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All summer long the happy Eve  
Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind, 20  
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,  
From the next glance she casts, to find  
That love for little things by Fate  
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound,  
So subtly are our eyes beguiled  
We see not nor suspect a bound,  
No more than in some forest wild;  
The sight is free as air — or erst  
Only by art in nature lost. 30

And, though the jealous turf refuse  
By random footsteps to be prest,  
And feed on never-sullied dews,  
Ye, gentle breezes from the west,  
With all the ministers of hope  
Are tempted to this sunny slope !

And hither throngs of birds resort;  
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,  
Some, perched on stems of stately port  
That nod to welcome transient guests; 40  
While hare and leveret, seen at play,  
*Appear* not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)  
This delicate Enclosure shows  
Of modest kindness, that would hide  
The firm protection she bestows;  
Of manners, like its viewless fence,  
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse — her wing  
Abruptly spreading to depart, 50

She left that farewell offering,  
Memento for some docile heart;  
That may respect the good old age  
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page;  
And Truth would skim the flowery glade,  
Though entering but as Fancy's Shade.

TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE  
HON. MISS P.

1824. 1827

Composed in the Grounds of Plass Newidd,  
near Llangollen, 1824.

In this Vale of Meditation my friend Jones resided, having been allowed by his diocesan to fix himself there without resigning his Living in Oxfordshire. He was with my wife and daughter and me when we visited these celebrated ladies who had retired, as one may say, into notice in this vale. Their cottage lay directly in the road between London and Dublin, and they were of course visited by their Irish friends as well as innumerable strangers. They took much delight in passing jokes on our friend Jones's plumpness, ruddy cheeks, and smiling countenance, as little suited to a hermit living in the Vale of Meditation. We all thought there was ample room for retort on his part, so curious was the appearance of these ladies, so elaborately sentimental about themselves and their *Cava Albergo*, as they named it in an inscription on a tree that stood opposite, the endearing epithet being preceded by the word *Ecco*! calling upon the saunterer to look about him. So oddly was one of these ladies attired that we took her, at a little distance, for a Roman Catholic priest, with a crucifix and relics hung at his neck. They were without caps, their hair bushy and white as snow, which contributed to the mistake.

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite  
Dec,  
Along the VALE OF MEDITATION flows;  
So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased to  
see

In Nature's face the expression of repose;  
Or haply there some pious hermit chose  
To live and die, the peace of heaven his aim;  
To whom the wild sequestered region owes  
At this late day, its sanctifying name.

GLYN CAFAILLGARROCH, in the Cambrian  
tongue,

In ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let this  
spot

Be named; where, faithful to a low-roofed  
Cot,

On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;  
Sisters in love, a love allowed to climb,  
Even on this earth, above the reach of  
Time!

TO THE TORRENT AT THE  
DEVIL'S BRIDGE, NORTH  
WALES, 1824

1824. 1827

How art thou named? In search of what  
strange land,  
From what huge height descending? Can  
such force

Of waters issue from a British source,  
Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the  
band

Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with  
hand

Desperate as thine? Or come the inces-  
sant shocks

From that young Stream, that smites the  
throbbing rocks

Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,  
As in life's morn; permitted to behold,  
From the dread chasm, woods climbing  
above woods,

In pomp that fades not; everlasting snows;  
And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose;  
Such power possess the family of floods  
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS  
OF A CASTLE IN NORTH WALES

1824. 1827

Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless  
halls,

Wandering with timid footsteps oft be-  
trayed,

The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid  
Old Time, though he, gentlest among the

Thralls  
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid

His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,  
From the wan Moon, upon the towers and  
walls,

Light deepening the profoundest sleep of  
shade.

Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten wars,  
To winds abandoned and the prying stars,  
Time loves Thee! at his call the Seasons  
twine

Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead  
hoar;  
And, though past pomp no changes can  
restore,  
A soothing recompence, his gift, is thine !

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE  
DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW

1824. 1827

On Mrs. Fermor. This lady had been a widow long before I knew her. Her husband was of the family of the lady celebrated in the "Rape of the Lock," and was, I believe, a Roman Catholic. The sorrow which his death caused her was fearful in its character as described in this poem, but was subdued in course of time by the strength of her religious faith. I have been, for many weeks at a time, an inmate with her at Coleorton Hall, as were also Mrs. Wordsworth and my Sister. The truth in the sketch of her character here given was acknowledged with gratitude by her nearest relatives. She was eloquent in conversation, energetic upon public matters, open in respect to those, but slow to communicate her personal feelings; upon these she never touched in her intercourse with me, so that I could not regard myself as her confidential friend, and was accordingly surprised when I learnt she had left me a legacy of £100, as a token of her esteem. See, in further illustration, the second stanza inscribed upon her Cenotaph in Coleorton church.

O FOR a dirge ! But why complain ?  
Ask rather a triumphal strain  
When FER MOR'S race is run;  
A garland of immortal boughs  
To twine around the Christian's brows,  
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;  
No tears of passionate regret  
Shall stain this votive lay;  
Ill-worthy, Beaumont ! were the grief 10  
That flings itself on wild relief  
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,  
For ever covetous to feel,  
And impotent to bear !  
Such once was hers — to think and think  
On severed love, and only sink  
From anguish to despair !

But nature to its inmost part  
Faith had refined; and to her heart 20  
A peaceful cradle given:  
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest  
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast  
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend  
So graciously ? — that could descend,  
Another's need to suit,  
So promptly from her lofty throne ? —  
In works of love, in these alone,  
How restless, how minute ! 30

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek  
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak  
When aught had suffered wrong, —  
When aught that breathes had felt a wound;  
Such look the Oppressor might confound,  
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs  
From out the bitterness of things;  
Her quiet is secure;  
No thorns can pierce her tender feet, 40  
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,  
As climbing jasmine, pure —

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,  
Or lily heaving with the wave  
That feeds it and defends;  
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed  
The mountain top, or breathed the mist  
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death !  
Thou strikest — absence perisheth, 50  
Indifference is no more;  
The future brightens on our sight;  
For on the past hath fallen a light  
That tempts us to adore.

## CENOTAPH

1824. 1842

See "Elegiac Stanzas. Addressed to Sir G. H. B. upon the death of his Sister-in-Law."

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor, whose remains are deposited in the church of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the love of a brother for the deceased, commends this memorial to the care of his heirs and successors in the possession of this place.

By vain affections unenthralled,  
 Though resolute when duty called  
 To meet the world's broad eye,  
 Pure as the holiest cloistered nun  
 That ever feared the tempting sun,  
 Did Fermor live and die.  
 This Tablet, hallowed by her name,  
 One heart-relieving tear may claim;  
 But if the pensive gloom  
 Of fond regret be still thy choice,  
 Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice  
 Of Jesus from her tomb!

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE  
 LIFE"

### EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE,  
 WESTMORELAND

1824. 1842

Owen Lloyd, the subject of this epitaph, was born at Old Brithay, near Ambleside, and was the son of Charles Lloyd and his wife Sophia (née Pemberton), both of Birmingham, who came to reside in this part of the country soon after their marriage. They had many children, both sons and daughters, of whom the most remarkable was the subject of this epitaph. He was educated under Mr. Dawes, at Ambleside; Dr. Butler, of Shrewsbury, and lastly at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he would have been greatly distinguished as a scholar but for inherited infirmities of bodily constitution, which, from early childhood, affected his mind. His love for the neighbourhood in which he was born, and his sympathy with the habits and characters of the mountain yeomanry, in conjunction with irregular spirits, that unfitted him for facing duties in situations to which he was unaccustomed, induced him to accept the retired curacy of Langdale. How much he was beloved and honoured there, and with what feelings he discharged his duty under the oppression of severe malady, is set forth, though imperfectly, in the epitaph.

By playful smiles (alas! too oft  
 A sad heart's sunshine), by a soft  
 And gentle nature, and a free  
 Yet modest hand of charity,  
 Through life was OWEN LLOYD endeared  
 To young and old; and how revered  
 Had been that pious spirit, a tide  
 Of humble mourners testified,  
 When, after pains dispensed to prove  
 The measure of God's chastening love,

Here, brought from far, his corse found  
 rest, —

Fulfilment of his own request; —  
 Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he  
 Planted with such fond hope the tree;  
 Less for the love of stream and rock,  
 Dear as they were, than that his Flock,  
 When they no more their Pastor's voice  
 Could hear to guide them in their choice  
 Through good and evil, help might have,  
 Admonished, from his silent grave,  
 Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,  
 For peace on earth and bliss in heaven.

1824.

### THE CONTRAST

THE PARROT AND THE WREN

1825. 1827

The Parrot belonged to Mrs. Luff while living at Fox-Ghyll. The Wren was one that haunted for many years the summer-house between the two terraces at Rydal Mount.

I

WITHIN her gilded cage confined,  
 I saw a dazzling Belle,  
 A Parrot of that famous kind  
 Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes;  
 And, smoothed by Nature's skill,  
 With pearl or gleaming agate vies  
 Her finely-curved bill.

Her plummy mantle's living hues  
 In mass opposed to mass,  
 Outline the splendour that imbues  
 The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate  
 Did never tempt the choice  
 Of feathered Thing most delicate  
 In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,  
 And singleness her lot,  
 She trills her song with tutored powers,  
 Or mocks each casual note.

20

No more of pity for regrets  
 With which she may have striven!  
 Now but in wantonness she frets,  
 Or spite, if cause be given;

Arch, volatile, a sportive bird  
By social glee inspired; †  
Ambitious to be seen or heard,  
And pleased to be admired!

II

THIS moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry,  
Harbours a self-contented Wren, 30  
Not shunning man's abode, though shy,  
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendeared,  
She never tried; the very nest  
In which this Child of Spring was reared,  
Is warmed, thro' winter, by her feathery  
breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives  
A slender unexpected strain;  
Proof that the hermitess still lives,  
Though she appear not, and be sought in  
vain. 40

Say, Dora! tell me, by you placid moon,  
If called to choose between the favoured  
pair,  
Which would you be, — the bird of the  
saloon  
By lady-fingers tended with nice care,  
Caressed, applauded, upon dainties fed,  
Or Nature's DARKLING of this mossy shed?

#### TO A SKY-LARK

1825. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount.

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
abound?  
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?  
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,  
Those quivering wings composed, that mu-  
sic still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a  
flood  
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and  
Home!

#### "ERE WITH COLD BEADS OF MIDNIGHT DEW"

1826. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. Suggested by the  
condition of a friend.

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew  
Had mingled tears of thine,  
I grieved, fond Youth! that thou shouldst  
sue  
To haughtily Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,  
She glories in a train  
Who drag, beneath our native skies,  
An oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,  
Forgetting in thy care  
How the fast-rooted trees can toss  
Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take  
Its own wild liberties;  
And, every day, the imprisoned lake  
Is flowing in the breeze.

Then, crouch no more on suppliant knee,  
But scorn with scorn outbrave;  
A Briton, even in love, should be  
A subject, not a slave!

#### ODE

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING

1826. 1835

This and the following poem originated in the  
lines "How delicate the leafy veil," etc. — My  
daughter and I left Rydal Mount upon a tour  
through our mountains with Mr. and Mrs. Carr  
in the month of May 1826, and as we were going  
up the vale of Newlands I was struck with the  
appearance of the little chapel gleaming through  
the veil of half-opened leaves; and the feeling  
which was then conveyed to my mind was ex-  
pressed in the stanza referred to above. As in  
the case of "Liberty" and "Humanity," my  
first intention was to write only one poem, but  
subsequently I broke it into two, making addi-  
tions to each part so as to produce a consistent  
and appropriate whole.

WHILE from the purpling east departs  
The star that led the dawn,



Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,  
 For May is on the lawn.  
 A quickening hope, a freshening glee,  
 Foreran the expected Power,  
 Whose first-drawn breath, from bush and  
 tree,  
 Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway  
 Tempers the year's extremes; 10  
 Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,  
 Like morning's dewy gleams;  
 While mellow warble, sprightly trill,  
 The tremulous heart excite;  
 And hums the balmy air to still  
 The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power! when youths and  
 maids  
 At peep of dawn would rise,  
 And wander forth, in forest glades  
 Thy birth to solemnize. 20  
 Though mute the song — to grace the  
 rite  
 Untouched the hawthorn bough,  
 Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;  
 Man changes, but not Thou!

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings  
 In love's disport employ;  
 Warmed by thy influence, creeping things  
 Awake to silent joy:  
 Queen art thou still for each gay plant  
 Where the slim wild deer roves; 30  
 And served in depths where fishes  
 haunt  
 Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,  
 Instinctive homage pay;  
 Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath  
 To honour thee, sweet May!  
 Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs  
 Behold a smokeless sky,  
 Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares  
 To open a bright eye. 40

And if, on this thy natal morn,  
 The pole, from which thy name  
 Hath not departed, stands forlorn  
 Of song and dance and game;  
 Still from the village-green a vow  
 Aspires to thee address,  
 Wherever peace is on the brow,  
 Or love within the breast.

Yes! where Love nestles thou canst teach  
 The soul to love the more; 50  
 Hearts also shall thy lessons reach  
 That never loved before.  
 Stript is the haughty one of pride,  
 The bashful freed from fear,  
 While rising, like the ocean-tide,  
 In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre! weak words refuse  
 The service to prolong!  
 To you exulting thrush the Muse  
 Entrusts the imperfect song; 60  
 His voice shall chant, in accents clear,  
 Throughout the live-long day,  
 Till the first silver star appear,  
 The sovereignty of May.

## TO MAY

1826-34. 1835

THOUGH many suns have risen and set  
 Since thou, blithe May, wert born,  
 And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget  
 Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn;  
 There are who to a birthday strain  
 Confine not harp and voice,  
 But evermore throughout thy reign  
 Are grateful and rejoice!

Delicious odours! music sweet,  
 Too sweet to pass away! 10  
 Oh for a deathless song to meet  
 The soul's desire — a lay  
 That, when a thousand years are told,  
 Should praise thee, genial Power!  
 Through summer heat, autumnal cold,  
 And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel — nor less,  
 If you ethereal blue  
 With its soft smile the truth express,  
 The heavens have felt it too. 20  
 The inmost heart of man if glad  
 Partakes a livelier cheer;  
 And eyes that cannot but be sad  
 Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks  
 Of hope that grew by stealth,  
 How many wan and faded cheeks  
 Have kindled into health!  
 The Old, by thee revived, have said,  
 "Another year is ours;" 30

And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,  
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lips a merry song  
Amid his playful peers?  
The tender Infant who was long  
A prisoner of fond fears;  
But now, when every sharp-edged blast  
Is quiet in its sheath,  
His Mother leaves him free to taste  
Earth's sweetness in thy breath. 40

Thy help is with the weed that creeps  
Along the humblest ground;  
No cliff so bare but on its steep  
Thy favours may be found;  
But most on some peculiar nook  
That our own hands have drest,  
Thou and thy train are proud to look,  
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth  
When May is whispering, "Come!" 50  
Choose from the bowers of virgin earth  
The happiest for your home;  
Heaven's bounteous love through me is  
spread  
From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,  
Drops on the mouldering turret's head,  
And on your turf-clad graves!"

Such greeting heard, away with sighs  
For lilies that must fade,  
Or "the rathe primrose as it dies  
Forsaken" in the shade! 60  
Vernal fruitions and desires  
Are linked in endless chase;  
While, as one kindly growth retires,  
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known  
Mishap by worm and blight;  
If expectations newly blown  
Have perished in thy sight;  
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,  
Were caught as in a snare; 70  
Such is the lot of all the young,  
However bright and fair.

Lo! Streams that April could not check  
Are patient of thy rule;  
Gurgling in foamy water-break,  
Loitering in glassy pool:  
By thee, thee only, could be sent  
Such gentle mists as glide,

Curling with unconfirmed intent,  
On that green mountain's side. 80

How delicate the leafy veil  
Through which yon house of God  
Gleams, mid the peace of this deep dale  
By few but shepherds trod!  
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,  
No sooner stand attired  
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise  
Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,  
Permit not for one hour, 90  
A blossom from thy crown to drop,  
Nor add to it a flower!  
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch  
Of self-restraining art,  
This modest charm of not too much,  
Part seen, imagined part!

"ONCE I COULD HAIL (HOW-  
E'R SERENE THE SKY)"

1826. 1827

"No faculty yet given me to espy  
The dusky Shape within her arms imbound."

Afterwards, when I could not avoid seeing it,  
I wondered at this, and the more so because,  
like most children, I had been in the habit of  
watching the moon through all her changes,  
and had often continued to gaze at it when at  
the full, till half blinded.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone  
Wi' the auld moone in hir arme."

*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,  
Ferry's Reliques.*

ONCE I could hail (how'e'r serene the sky)  
The Moon re-entering her monthly round,  
No faculty yet given me to espy  
The dusky Shape within her arms imbound,  
That thin memento of effulgence lost  
Which some have named her Predecessor's  
ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me shone,  
Nought I perceived within it dull or dim;  
All that appeared was suitable to One  
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to  
skin; 10  
To expectations spreading with wild growth,  
And hope that kept with me her plighted  
troth.

I saw (ambition quickening at the view)  
A silver boat launched on a boundless flood;  
A pearly crest, like Dian's when it threw  
Its brightest splendour round a leafy wood;  
But not a hint from under-ground, no sign  
Fit for the glimmering brow of Proserpine.

Or was it Dian's self that seemed to move  
Before me? — nothing blemished the fair  
sight;

On her I looked whom jocund Fairies love,  
Cynthia, who puts the *little* stars to flight,  
And by that thinning magnifies the great,  
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral  
Shape

As each new Moon obeyed the call of Time,  
If gloom fell on me, swift was my escape;  
Such happy privilege hath life's gay Prime,  
To see or not to see, as best may please  
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease. 30

Now, dazzling Stranger! when thou meet'st  
my glance,

Thy dark Associate ever I discern;  
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance  
While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or  
stern;

Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to  
gain

Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years;  
A mournful change, should Reason fail to  
bring

The timely insight that can temper fears,  
And from vicissitude remove its sting; 40  
While Faith aspires to seats in that domain  
Where joys are perfect — neither wax nor  
wane.

### "THE MASSY WAYS, CARRIED ACROSS THESE HEIGHTS"

1826. 1835

The walk is what we call the *Far-terrace*,  
beyond the summer house at Rydal Mount.  
The lines were written when we were afraid of  
being obliged to quit the place to which we  
were so much attached.

THE massy Ways, carried across these  
heights

By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,

Or hidden under ground, like sleeping  
worms.

How venture then to hope that Time will  
spare

This humble Walk? Yet on the moun-  
tain's side

A POET's hand first shaped it; and the  
steps

Of that same Bard — repeated to and fro  
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight  
skies

Through the vicissitudes of many a year —  
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey  
line.

No longer, scattering to the heedless winds  
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,  
Shall he frequent these precincts; locked  
no more

In earnest converse with beloved Friends,  
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,  
As from the beds and borders of a garden  
Choice flowers are gathered! But, if  
Power may spring

Out of a farewell yearning — favoured more  
Than kindred wishes mated suitably  
With vain regrets — the Exile would con-  
sign

This Walk, his loved possession, to the care  
Of those pure Minds that reverence the  
Muse.

### THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN

1826. 1827

These verses perhaps had better be trans-  
ferred to the class of "Italian Poems." I had  
observed in the Newspaper, that the Pillar of  
Trajan was given as a subject for a prize-poem  
in English verse. I had a wish perhaps that  
my son, who was then an undergraduate at  
Oxford, should try his fortune, and I told him  
so; but he, not having been accustomed to  
write verse, wisely declined to enter on the  
task; whereupon I showed him these lines as a  
proof of what might, without difficulty, be  
done on such a subject.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unfor-  
bidden weeds

O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds;  
And temples, doomed to milder change,  
unfold

A new magnificence that vies with old;  
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood  
A votive Column, spared by fire and  
flood:

And, though the passions of man's fretful  
 race  
 Have never ceased to eddy round its base,  
 Not injured more by touch of meddling  
 hands  
 Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands, 10  
 Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save  
 From death the memory of the good and  
 brave.  
 Historic figures round the shaft embost  
 Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost;  
 Still as he turns, the charmed spectator  
 sees  
 Group winding after group with dream-like  
 ease;  
 Triumphs in sunbright gratitude displayed,  
 Or softly stealing into modest shade.  
 — So, pleased with purple clusters to en-  
 twine  
 Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring  
 vine; 20  
 The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and  
 breathes  
 Wide-spreading odours from her flowery  
 wreaths.  
 Borne by the Muse from rills in shep-  
 herds' ears  
 Murmuring but one smooth story for all  
 years,  
 I gladly commune with the mind and  
 heart  
 Of him who thus survives by classic art,  
 His actions witness, venerate his mien,  
 And study Trajan as by Pliny seen;  
 Behold how fought the Chief whose con-  
 quering sword  
 Stretched far as earth might own a single  
 lord; 30  
 In the delight of moral prudence schooled,  
 How feelingly at home the Sovereign ruled;  
 Best of the good — in pagan faith allied  
 To more than Man, by virtue deified.  
 Memorial Pillar! 'mid the wrecks of  
 Time  
 Preserve thy charge with confidence sub-  
 lime —  
 The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,  
 Whence half the breathing world received  
 its doom;  
 Things that recoil from language; that, if  
 shown  
 By apter pencil, from the light had flown. 30  
 A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,  
*There* greets an Embassy from Indian  
 shores;

Lo! he harangues his cohorts — *there* the  
 storm  
 Of battle meets him in authentic form!  
 Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish  
 horse  
 Sweep to the charge; more high, the  
 Dacian force,  
 To hoof and finger mailed; — yet, high or  
 low,  
 None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the  
 foe.  
 In every Roman, through all turns of fate,  
 Is Roman dignity inviolate; 50  
 Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,  
 Supports, adorns, and over all presides;  
 Distinguished only by inherent state  
 From honoured Instruments that round  
 him wait;  
 Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test  
 Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest  
 On aught by which another is deprest.  
 — Alas! that One thus disciplined could toil  
 To enslave whole nations on their native soil;  
 So emulous of Macedonian fame, 60  
 That, when his age was measured with his  
 aim,  
 He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,  
 And turned his eagles back with deep-  
 drawn sighs:  
 O weakness of the Great! O folly of the  
 Wise!  
 Where now the haughty Empire that  
 was spread  
 With such fond hope? her very speech is  
 dead;  
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,  
 And Trajan still, through various enterprise,  
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the  
 skies:  
 Still are we present with the imperial Chief,  
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief 70  
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,  
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the  
 Mind.

## FAREWELL LINES

1826. 1842

These lines were designed as a farewell to  
 Charles Lamb and his sister, who had retired  
 from the throngs of London to comparative  
 solitude in the village of Enfield.

"HIGH bliss is only for a higher state,"  
 But, surely, if severe afflictions borne

With patience merit the reward of peace,  
Peace ye deserve; and may the solid good,  
Sought by a wise though late exchange, and  
here

With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-roof  
To you accorded, never be withdrawn,  
Nor for the world's best promises re-  
nounced.

Most soothing was it for a welcome Friend,  
Fresh from the crowded city, to behold  
That lonely union, privacy so deep,  
Such calm employments, such entire con-  
tent.

So when the rain is over, the storm laid,  
A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,  
Upon a rocky islet, side by side,  
Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease;  
And so, when night with grateful gloom  
had fallen,

Two glow-worms in such nearness that they  
shared,  
As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,  
Each with the other, on the dewy ground,  
Where He that made them blesses their  
repose.—

When wandering among lakes and hills I  
note,

Once more, those creatures thus by nature  
paired,

And guarded in their tranquil state of life,  
Even, as your happy presence to my mind  
Their union brought, will they repay the  
debt,

And send a thankful spirit back to you,  
With hope that we, dear Friends! shall  
meet again.

#### ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE FORM OF A HARP

THE WORK OF E. M. S.

1827. 1827

**FROWNS** are on every Muse's face,  
Reproaches from their lips are sent,  
That mimicry should thus disgrace  
The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size!  
Needles for strings in apt gradation!  
Minerva's self would stigmatize  
The unclassic profanation.

Even her *own* needle that subdued  
Arachne's rival spirit,

Though wrought in Vulcan's happiest  
mood,  
Such honour could not merit.

And this, too, from the Laureate's Child,  
A living lord of melody!  
How will her Sire be reconciled  
To the refined indignity?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,  
"Bard! moderate your ire;  
Spirits of all degrees rejoice  
In presence of the lyre.

20

The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,  
Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,  
Have shells to fit their tiny hands  
And suit their slender lays.

Some, still more delicate of ear,  
Have lutes (believe my words)  
Whose framework is of gossamer,  
While sunbeams are the chords.

Gay Sylphs this miniature will court,  
Made vocal by their brushing wings, 30  
And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport  
Around its polished strings;

Whence strains to love-sick maiden dear,  
While in her lonely bower she tries  
To cheat the thought she cannot cheer,  
By fanciful embroideries.

Trust, angry Bard! a knowing Sprite,  
Nor think the Harp her lot depletes!  
Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shine bright,  
Love *stoops* as fondly as he soars." 40

TO —

1827. 1827

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one  
afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the  
Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well ac-  
quainted with them, but I was particularly  
struck on that occasion by the dignified sim-  
plicity and majestic harmony that runs through  
most of them, — in character so totally differ-  
ent from the Italian, and still more so from  
Shakspeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I  
may be allowed to say so, and produced three  
Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever  
wrote except an irregular one at school. Of  
these three, the only one I distinctly remember

is "I grieved for Buonaparté." One was never written down: the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot particularise.

HAPPY the feeling from the bosom thrown  
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare

Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown  
For summer pastime into wanton air;  
Happy the thought best likened to a stone  
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,

Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,  
Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone  
That tempted first to gather it. That here,  
O chief of Friends! such feelings I present,  
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,  
Were a vain notion; but the hope is dear,  
That thou, if not with partial joy elate,  
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild content!

"HER ONLY PILOT THE SOFT  
BREEZE"

1827. 1827

HER only pilot the soft breeze, the boat  
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied;  
With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory, at her side,

And the glad Muse at liberty to note  
All that to each is precious, as we float  
Gently along; regardless who shall chide  
If the heavens smile, and leave us free to glide,

Happy Associates breathing air remote  
From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the Muse,

Why have I crowded this small bark with you

And others of your kind, ideal crew!  
While here sits One whose brightness owes its hues

To flesh and blood; no Goddess from above,  
No fleeting Spirit, but my own true love?

"WHY, MINSTREL, THESE UN-  
TUNEFUL MURMURINGS"

1827. 1827

"WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful mur-  
murings—

Dull, flagging notes that with each other jar?"

"Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far  
From its own country, and forgive the strings."

A simple answer! but even so forth springs,  
From the Castalian fountain of the heart,  
The Poetry of Life, and all that Art  
Divine of words quickening insensate things.  
From the submissive necks of guiltless men  
Stretched on the block, the glittering axe recoils;

Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the toils

Of mortal sympathy; what wonder then  
That the poor Harp distempered music yields

To its sad Lord, far from his native fields?

TO S. H.

1827. 1827

EXCUSE is needless when with love sincere  
Of occupation, not by fashion led,  
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with dust o'erspread;

My nerves from no such murmur shrink,—  
tho' near,

Soft as the Dorkhawk's to a distant ear,  
When twilight shades darken the mountain's head.

Even She who toils to spin our vital thread  
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so dear  
To household virtues. Venerable Art,  
Torn from the Poor! yet shall kind Heaven protect

Its own; though Rulers, with undue respect,  
Trusting to crowded factory and mart  
And proud discoveries of the intellect,  
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient heart.

DECAY OF PIETY

1827. 1827

Attendance at church on prayer-days,  
Wednesdays and Fridays and Holidays,  
received a shock at the Revolution. It is now, however, happily reviving. The ancient people described in this Sonnet were among the last of that pious class. May we hope that the practice, now in some degree renewed, will continue to spread.

OFT have I seen, ere Time had ploughed  
my cheek,

Matrons and Sires—who, punctual to the call

Of their loved Church, on fast or festival  
Through the long year the house of Prayer  
would seek:

By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak  
Of Easter winds, unscared, from hut or hall  
They came to lowly bench or sculptured  
stall,

But with one fervour of devotion meek.  
I see the places where they once were known,  
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling  
crowds,

Is ancient Piety for ever flown ?

Alas ! even then they seemed like fleecy  
clouds

That, struggling through the western sky,  
have won

Their pensive light from a departed sun !

### "SCORN NOT THE SONNET"

1827. 1827

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk  
on the western side of Rydal Lake.

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,

Mindless of its just honours; with this key  
Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;

A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;  
With it Camoens soothed an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-  
land

To struggle through dark ways; and, when  
a damp

Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he  
blew

Soul-animating strains — alas, too few !

### "FAIR PRIME OF LIFE! WERE IT ENOUGH TO GILD"

1827. 1827

Suggested by observation of the way in  
which a young friend, whom I do not choose to  
name, mispent his time and misapplied his  
talents. He took afterwards a better course,  
and became a useful member of society, re-  
spected, I believe, wherever he has been known.

FAIR Prime of life ! were it enough to gild  
With ready sunbeams every straggling  
shower;

And, if an unexpected cloud should lower,  
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to build  
For Fancy's errands, — then, from fields  
half-tilled

Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy  
flower,

Thee might thy Minions crown, and chant  
thy power,

Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.

Ah ! show that worthier honours are thy  
due;

Fair Prime of life ! arouse the deeper heart;  
Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue  
Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim;  
And, if there be a joy that slights the claim  
Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

### RETIREMENT

1827. 1827

If the whole weight of what we think and  
feel,

Save only far as thought and feeling blend  
With action, were as nothing, patriot  
Friend !

From thy remonstrance would be no appeal;  
But to promote and fortify the weal

Of our own Being is her paramount end;  
A truth which they alone shall comprehend  
Who shun the mischief which they cannot  
heal.

Peace in these feverish times is sovereign  
bliss:

Here, with no thirst but what the stream  
can slake,

And startled only by the rustling brake,  
Cool air I breathe; while the unincumbered  
Mind

By some weak aims at services assigned  
To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven amiss.

### "THERE IS A PLEASURE IN POETIC PAINS"

1827. 1827

*THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains  
Which only Poets know; — 't was rightly said;  
Whom could the Muses else allure to tread  
Their smoothest paths, to wear their light-  
est chains ?*

When happiest Fancy has inspired the  
strains,  
How oft the malice of one luckless word  
Pursues the Enthusiast to the social board,  
Haunts him belated on the silent plains!  
Yet he repines not, if his thought stand  
clear,  
At last, of hindrance and obscurity,  
Fresh as the star that crowns the brow of  
morn;  
Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded tear  
The moment it has left the virgin's eye,  
(Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed thorn.

RECOLLECTION OF THE POR-  
TRAIT OF KING HENRY  
EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE,  
CAMBRIDGE

1827. 1827

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,  
Are yet before me; yet do I behold  
The broad full visage, chest of amplest  
mould,  
The vestments 'broidered with barbaric  
pride:  
And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's side,  
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy  
With the keen threatenings of that fulgent  
eye,  
Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far-de-  
seried.  
Who trembles now at thy capricious mood?  
'Mid those surrounding Worthies, haughty  
King,  
We rather think, with grateful mind sedate,  
How Providence educeth, from the spring  
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams of  
good,  
Which neither force shall check nor time  
abate!

"WHEN PHILOCTETES IN THE  
LEMNIAN ISLE"

1827. 1827

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle  
Like a form sculptured on a monument  
Lay couched; on him or his dread bow un-  
bent  
Some wild Bird oft might settle and be-  
guile  
The rigid features of a transient smile,

Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give vent,  
Slackening the pains of ruthless banishment  
From his loved home, and from heroic toil.  
And trust that spiritual Creatures round us  
move,  
Griefs to allay which Reason cannot heal;  
Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to prove  
To fettered wretchedness, that no Bastile  
Is deep enough to exclude the light of love,  
Though man for brother man has ceased to  
feel.

"WHILE ANNA'S PEERS AND  
EARLY PLAYMATES TREAD"

1827. 1827

This is taken from the account given by  
Miss Jewsbury of the pleasure she derived,  
when long confined to her bed by sickness, from  
the inanimate object on which this Sonnet  
turns.

WHILE Anna's peers and early playmates  
tread,  
In freedom, mountain-turf and river's  
marge;  
Or float with music in the festal barge;  
Rein the proud steed, or through the dance  
are led;  
Her doom it is to press a weary bed—  
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some charge  
More urgent called, will stretch his wings  
at large,  
And friends too rarely prop the languid  
head.  
Yet, helped by Genius—untired comforter,  
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for her  
Can cheat the time; sending her fancy out  
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,  
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor  
shout;  
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring eyes.

TO THE CUCKOO

1827. 1827

NOT the whole warbling grove in concert  
heard  
When sunshine follows shower, the breast  
can thrill  
Like the first summons, Cuckoo! of thy  
bill,  
With its twin notes inseparably paired.



The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned,  
 unaired,  
 Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,  
 That cry can reach; and to the sick man's  
 room  
 Sends gladness, by no languid smile de-  
 clared.  
 The lordly eagle-race through hostile  
 search  
 May perish; time may come when never  
 more  
 The wilderness shall hear the lion roar;  
 But, long as cock shall crow from house-  
 hold perch  
 To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed  
 thy wing,  
 And thy erratic voice be faithful to the  
 Spring!

## THE INFANT M—— M——

1827. 1827

The infant was Mary Monkhouse, the only daughter of my friend and cousin Thomas Monkhouse.

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace  
 Forgets her nature, opening like a flower  
 That neither feeds nor wastes its vital power  
 In painful struggles. Months each other  
 chase,  
 And nought untunes that Infant's voice; no  
 trace  
 Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek;  
 Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek  
 That one enrapt with gazing on her face  
 (Which even the placid innocence of death  
 Could scarcely make more placid, heaven  
 more bright)  
 Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,  
 The Virgin, as she shone with kindred  
 light;  
 A nursing couched upon her mother's knee,  
 Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

## TO ROTH A Q——

1827. 1827

Rotha, the daughter of my son-in-law Mr. Quillinan.

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child! this head was  
 grey  
 When at the sacred font for thee I stood;

Pledged till thou reach the verge of woman-  
 hood,  
 And shalt become thy own sufficient stay:  
 Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan! was the day  
 For stedfast hope the contract to fulfil;  
 Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,  
 Embodied in the music of this Lay,  
 Breathed forth beside the peaceful moun-  
 tain Stream  
 Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mo-  
 ther's ear  
 After her throes, this Stream of name more  
 dear  
 Since thou dost bear it,—a memorial  
 theme  
 For others; for thy future self, a spell  
 To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

TO —, IN HER SEVENTIETH  
YEAR

1827. 1827

Lady Fitzgerald, as described to me by Lady Beaumont.

SUCH age how beautiful! O Lady bright,  
 Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined  
 By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind  
 To something purer and more exquisite  
 Than flesh and blood; whence'er thou  
 meet'st my sight,  
 When I behold thy blanched unwithered  
 cheek,  
 Thy temples fringed with locks of gleam-  
 ing white,  
 And head that droops because the soul is  
 meek,  
 Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I com-  
 pare;  
 That child of winter, prompting thoughts  
 that climb  
 From desolation toward the genial prime;  
 Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty  
 air,  
 And filling more and more with crystal  
 light  
 As pensive Evening deepens into night.

"IN MY MIND'S EYE A TEMPLE,  
LIKE A CLOUD"

1827. 1827

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud  
 Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,

Rose out of darkness: the bright Work  
stood still:  
And might of its own beauty have been  
proud,  
But it was fashioned and to God was vowed  
By Virtues that diffused, in every part,  
Spirit divine through forms of human art:  
Faith had her arch — her arch, when winds  
blow loud,  
Into the consciousness of safety thrilled;  
And Love her towers of dread foundation  
laid  
Under the grave of things; Hope had her  
spire  
Star-high, and pointing still to something  
higher  
Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice — it  
said,  
“Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms when  
we build.”

‘GO BACK TO ANTIQUE AGES,  
IF THINE EYES”

1827. 1827

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes  
The genuine mien and character would  
trace  
Of the rash Spirit that still holds her  
place,  
Prompting the world's audacious vanities!  
Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise;  
The pyramid extend its monstrous base,  
For some Aspirant of our short-lived race,  
Anxious an æry name to immortalize.  
There, too, ere wiles and politic dispute  
Gave specious colouring to aim and act,  
See the first mighty Hunter leave the  
brute —  
To chase mankind, with men in armies  
packed  
For his field-pastime high and absolute,  
While, to dislodge his game, cities are  
sacked!

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL

1827. 1827

WILD Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemima's  
lip  
Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love might  
say,

A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip  
Its glistening dew; but hallowed is the clay  
Which the Muse warms; and I, whose head  
is grey,  
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship;  
Nor could I let one thought — one notion  
— slip  
That might thy sylvan confidence betray.  
For are we not all His without whose care  
Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the  
ground?  
Who gives his Angels wings to speed  
through air,  
And rolls the planets through the blue  
profound;  
Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer! nor  
forbear  
To trust a Poet in still musings bound.

CONCLUSION

TO —

1827. 1827

If these brief Records, by the Muses' art  
Produced as lonely Nature or the strife  
That animates the scenes of public life  
Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part;  
And if these Transcripts of the private  
heart  
Have gained a sanction from thy falling  
tears;  
Then I repent not. But my soul hath fears  
Breathed from eternity; for, as a dart  
Cleaves the blank air, Life flies: now every  
day  
Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift  
wheel  
Of the revolving week. Away, away,  
All fitful cares, all transitory zeal!  
So timely Grace the immortal wing may  
heal,  
And honour rest upon the senseless clay.

A MORNING EXERCISE

1828. 1832

Written at Rydal Mount. I could wish the  
last five stanzas of this to be read with the  
poem addressed to the skylark.

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the glad,  
Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to throw;

Sending sad shadows after things not sad,  
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of  
woe:

Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry  
Becomes an echo of man's misery.

Blithe ravens croak of death; and when  
the owl  
Tries his two voices for a favourite strain —  
*Tu-whit — Tu-who!* the unsuspecting fowl  
Forebodes mishap or seems but to com-  
plain; 10  
Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,  
Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked In-  
dians stray,  
Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;  
A feathered task-master cries, "WORK  
AWAY!"  
And, in thy iteration, "WHIP POOR  
WILL!"  
Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,  
Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient  
lays 10  
Steeped in dire grief the voice of Philomel;  
And that fleet messenger of summer days,  
The Swallow, twittered subject to like spell;  
But ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant  
Lark  
To melancholy service — hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,  
Not lifting yet the head that evening bowed;  
But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,  
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy  
cloud;  
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;  
The happiest bird that sprang out of the  
Ark! 30

Hail, blest above all kinds! — Supremely  
skilled,  
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,  
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to  
build  
On such forbearance as the deep may show;  
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,  
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the  
meek dove;  
Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;

So constant with thy downward eye of love,  
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free; 40  
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice  
In power of wing and never-wearied voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring warbler! — that love-  
prompted strain  
(*"Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond*)  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:  
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege!  
to sing  
All independent of the leafy spring.

How would it please old Ocean to partake,  
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain, 50  
The harmony thy notes most gladly make  
Where earth resembles most his own do-  
main!  
Urania's self might welcome with pleased  
ear  
These matins mounting towards her native  
sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom no  
bars  
To day-light known deter from that pursuit,  
'T is well that some sage instinct, when the  
stars  
Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still and  
mute;  
For not an eyelid could to sleep incline  
Wert thou among them, singing as they  
shine! 60

### THE TRIAD

1828. 1829

Written at Rydal Mount. The Girls, Edith  
Southey, my daughter Dora, and Sara Cole-  
ridge.

Snow me the noblest Youth of present  
time,  
Whose trembling fancy would to love give  
birth;  
Some God or Hero, from the Olympian  
cline  
Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;  
Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see  
The brightest star of ages yet to be,  
And I will mate and match him blissfully.  
I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood  
Pure as herself — (song lacks not mightier  
power)

Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless  
wood,

Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her coral  
bower;

Mere Mortals bodied forth in vision still,  
Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill  
The chaster coverts of a British hill.

"Appear! — obey my lyre's command!  
Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!

For ye, though not by birth allied,  
Are Sisters in the bond of love;  
Nor shall the tongue of envious pride  
Presume those interweavings to reprove 20  
In you, which that fair progeny of Jove,  
Learned from the tune-fair spheres that  
glide

In endless union, earth and sea above."

— I sing in vain; — the pines have hushed  
their waving:

A peerless Youth expectant at my side,  
Breathless as they, with unabated craving  
Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air;  
And, with a wandering eye that seems to  
chide,

Asks of the clouds what occupants they  
hide: —

But why solicit more than sight could bear,  
By casting on a moment all we dare? 31  
Invoke we those bright Beings one by one;  
And what was boldly promised, truly shall  
be done.

"Fear not a constraining measure!

— Yielding to this gentle spell,  
Lucida! from domes of pleasure,  
Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,  
Come to regions solitary,  
Where the eagle builds her airy,  
Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!" 40  
— She comes! — behold

That Figure, like a ship with snow-white  
sail!

Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts her veil;  
Upon her coming wait

As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale  
As e'er, on herbage covering earthly mould,  
Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold  
His richest splendour — when his veering  
gait

And every motion of his starry train  
Seem governed by a strain 50  
Of music, audible to him alone.

"O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest  
throne!

Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit  
Beside an unambitious hearth to sit

Domestic queen, where grandeur is un-  
known;

What living man could fear

The worst of Fortune's malice, wert Thou  
near,

Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,  
That its fair flowers may from his cheek  
Brush the too happy tear? 60

— Queen, and handmaid lowly!

Whose skill can speed the day with lively  
cares,

And banish melancholy

By all that mind invents or hand prepares,  
O Thou, against whose lip, without its smile  
And in its silence even, no heart is proof;  
Whose goodness, sinking deep, would recon-  
cile

The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace  
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof

Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of  
Wallace — 70

Who that hath seen thy beauty could con-  
tent

His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly  
day?

Who that hath loved thee, but would lay  
His strong hand on the wind, if it were bent  
To take thee in thy majesty away?

Pass onward (even the glancing deer  
Till we depart intrude not here);

That mossy slope, o'er which the woodbine  
throws

A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose!" 80  
— Glad moment is it when the throng

Of warblers in full concert strong  
Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout

The lagging shower, and force coy Phœbus  
out,

Met by the rainbow's form divine,  
Issuing from her cloudy shrine; —

So may the thrillings of the lyre  
Prevail to further our desire,

While to these shades a sister Nymph I  
call.

"Come, if the notes thine ear may  
piece,

Come, youngest of the lovely Three,  
Submissive to the might of verse

And the dear voice of harmony,  
By none more deeply felt than Thee!"

— I sang; and lo! from pastimes virginal  
She hastens to the tents

Of nature, and the lonely elements.  
Air sparkles round her with a dazzling  
sheen;

But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture  
green !

And, as if wishful to disarm  
Or to repay the potent Charm, 100  
She bears the stringèd lute of old romance,  
That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,  
And soothed war-wearied knights in raft-  
ered hall.

How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee !  
So tripped the Muse, inventress of the  
dance;

So, truant in waste woods, the blithe Eu-  
phrosyne !

But the ringlets of that head  
Why are they ungarlanded ?  
Why bedeck her temples less  
Than the simplest shepherdess ? 110  
Is it not a brow inviting  
Choicest flowers that ever breathed,  
Which the myrtle would delight in  
With Idalian rose cnwreathed ?  
But her humility is well content  
With *one* wild floweret (call it not for-  
lorn),

FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her bosom  
worn —

Yet more for love than ornament.  
Open, ye thickets ! let her fly,  
Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and  
height ! 120

For She, to all but those who love her, shy,  
Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's  
sight;

Though where she is beloved and loves,  
Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves;  
Her happy spirit as a bird is free,  
That rifles blossoms on a tree,  
Turning them inside out with arch audacity.  
Alas ! how little can a moment show

Of an eye where feeling plays  
In ten thousand dewy rays; 130  
A face o'er which a thousand shadows go !  
— She stops — is fastened to that rivulet's  
side;

And there (while, with sedater mien,  
O'er timid waters that have scarcely left  
Their birthplace in the rocky cleft  
She bends) at leisure may be seen  
Features to old ideal grace allied,  
Amid their smiles and dimples dignified —  
Fit countenance for the soul of primal truth;  
The bland composure of eternal youth ! 140  
What more changeful than the sea ?  
But over his great tides  
Fidelity presides;

And this light-hearted Maiden constant is  
as he.

High is her aim as heaven above,  
And wide as ether her good-will;  
And, like the lowly reed, her love  
Can drink its nurture from the scantiest  
rill:

Insight as keen as frosty star  
Is to *her* charity no bar, 150  
Nor interrupts her frolic graces  
When she is, far from these wild places,  
Encircled by familiar faces.

O the charm that manners draw,  
Nature, from thy genuine law !  
If from what her hand would do,  
Her voice would utter, aught ensue  
Untoward or unfit;  
She, in benign affections pure,  
In self-forgetfulness secure, 160  
Sheds round the transient harm or vague  
mischance

A light unknown to tutored elegance:  
Hers is not a cheek shame-stricken,  
But her blushes are joy-flushes;  
And the fault (if fault it be)  
Only ministers to quicken  
Laughter-loving gaiety,  
And kindle sportive wit —  
Leaving this Daughter of the mountains free  
As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery  
Had crossed her purpose with some quaint  
vagary. 171

And heard his viewless bands  
Over their mirthful triumph clapping hands.

“ Last of the Three, though eldest born,  
Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn  
Touched by the skylark's earliest note,  
Ere humbler gladness be afloat.  
But whether in the semblance drest  
Of Dawn — or Eve, fair vision of the west,  
Come with each anxious hope subdued 180  
By woman's gentle fortitude,  
Each grief, through meekness, settling into  
rest.

— Or I would hail thee when some high-  
wrought page

Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand  
Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand  
Among the glories of a happier age.”  
Her brow hath opened on me — see it there,  
Brightening the unbrage of her hair;  
So gleams the crescent moon, that loves  
To be descried through shady groves. 190  
Tenderest bloom is on her cheek;  
Wish not for a richer streak;

Nor dread the depth of meditative eye;  
 But let thy love, upon that azure field  
 Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield  
 Its homage offered up in purity.  
 What would'st thou more? In sunny glade,  
 Or under leaves of thickest shade,  
 Was such a stillness e'er diffused  
 Since earth grew calm while angels  
     mused? <sup>200</sup>  
 Softly she treads, as if her foot were loth  
 To crush the mountain dew-drops — soon  
     to melt  
 On the flower's breast; as if she felt  
 That flowers themselves, whate'er their hue,  
 With all their fragrance, all their glistening,  
 Call to the heart for inward listening —  
 And though for bridal wreaths and tokens  
     true  
 Welcomed wisely; though a growth  
 Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,  
 As fitly spring from turf the mourner weeps  
     on — <sup>210</sup>  
 And without wrong are cropped the marble  
     tomb to strew.  
 The Charm is over; the mute Phantoms  
     gone,  
 Nor will return — but droop not, favoured  
     Youth;  
 The apparition that before thee shone  
 Obeyed a summons covetous of truth.  
 From these wild rocks thy footsteps I will  
     guide  
 To bowers in which thy fortune may be  
     tried,  
 And one of the bright Three become thy  
     happy Bride.

## THE WISHING-GATE

1828. 1829

Written at Rydal Mount. See also "Wishing-gate Destroyed."

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green:  
 All powers that serve the bright-eyed  
     Queen  
     Are confident and gay;  
 Clouds at her bidding disappear;  
 Points she to aught? — the bliss draws near,  
     And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes — there  
 Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,  
     And thoughts with things at strife;  
 Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart, <sup>10</sup>  
 Ye superstitions of the *heart*,  
     How poor, were human life!

When magic lore abjured its might,  
 Ye did not forfeit one dear right,  
     One tender claim abate;  
 Witness this symbol of your sway,  
 Surviving near the public way,  
     The rustic Wishing-gate!

Inquire not if the faery race  
 Shed kindly influence on the place, <sup>20</sup>  
     Ere northward they retired;  
 If here a warrior left a spell,  
 Panting for glory as he fell;  
     Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,  
 Composed with Nature's finest care,  
     And in her fondest love —  
 Peace to embosom and content —  
 To overawe the turbulent,  
     The selfish to reprove. <sup>30</sup>

Yea! even the Stranger from afar,  
 Reclining on this moss-grown bar,  
     Unknowing, and unknown,  
 The infection of the ground partakes,  
 Longing for his Beloved — who makes  
     All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear  
 The mystic stirrings that are here,  
     The ancient faith disclaim?  
 The local Genius ne'er befriends <sup>40</sup>  
 Desires whose course in folly ends,  
     Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,  
 If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,  
     Here crave an easier lot;  
 If some have thirsted to renew  
 A broken vow, or bind a true,  
     With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast  
 Upon the irrevocable past, <sup>50</sup>  
     Some Penitent sincere  
 May for a worthier future sigh,  
 While trickles from his downcast eye  
     No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed  
 From turmoil, who would turn or speed  
 The current of his fate,  
 Might stop before this favoured scene,  
 At Nature's call, nor blush to lean  
 Upon the Wishing-gate.

60

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak  
 Is man, though loth such help to seek,  
 Yet, passing, here might pause,  
 And thirst for insight to allay  
 Misgiving, while the crimson day  
 In quietness withdraws;

Or when the church-clock's knell pro-  
 found  
 To Time's first step across the bound  
 Of midnight makes reply;  
 Time pressing on with starry crest,  
 To filial sleep upon the breast  
 Of dread eternity.

70

### THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED

1828. 1842

'T is gone — with old belief and dream  
 That round it clung, and tempting scheme  
 Released from fear and doubt;  
 And the bright landscape too must lie,  
 By this blank wall, from every eye,  
 Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed  
 That opening — but a look ye cast  
 Upon the lake below,  
 What spirit-stirring power it gained  
 From faith which here was entertained,  
 Though reason might say no.

100

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the  
 springs  
 Of history, Glory claps her wings,  
 Fame sheds the exulting tear;  
 Yet earth is wide, and many a nook  
 Unheard of is, like this, a book  
 For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought  
 That grafted, on so fair a spot,  
 So confident a token  
 Of coming good; — the charm is fled,  
 Indulgent centuries spun a thread,  
 Which one harsh day has broken.

20

Alas! for him who gave the word;  
 Could he no sympathy afford,  
 Derived from earth or heaven,  
 To hearts so oft by hope betrayed;  
 Their very wishes wanted aid  
 Which here was freely given?

30

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,  
 Will now so readily be found  
 A balm of expectation?  
 Anxious for far-off children, where  
 Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air  
 Of home-felt consolation?

And not unfelt will prove the loss  
 'Mid trivial care and petty cross  
 And each day's shallow grief;  
 Though the most easily beguiled  
 Were oft among the first that smiled  
 At their own fond belief.

40

If still the reckless change we mourn,  
 A reconciling thought may turn  
 To harm that might lurk here,  
 Ere judgment prompted from within  
 Fit aims, with courage to begin,  
 And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man: our state  
 Enjoins, while firm resolves await  
 On wishes just and wise.  
 That strenuous action follow both,  
 And life be one perpetual growth  
 Of heaven-ward enterprise.

50

So taught, so trained, we boldly face  
 All accidents of time and place;  
 Whatever props may fail,  
 Trust in that sovereign law can spread  
 New glory o'er the mountain's head,  
 Fresh beauty through the vale.

60

That truth informing mind and heart,  
 The simplest cottager may part,  
 Ungrieved, with charm and spell;  
 And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee  
 The voice of grateful memory  
 Shall bid a kind farewell!

### A JEWISH FAMILY

IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR,  
 UPON THE RHINE

1828. 1835

Coleridge, my daughter, and I, in 1828, passed  
 a fortnight upon the banks of the Rhine, prin-

cipally under the hospitable roof of Mr. Aders of Gotesburg, but two days of the time we spent at St. Goar in rambles among the neighbouring valleys. It was at St. Goar that I saw the Jewish family here described. Though exceedingly poor, and in rags, they were not less beautiful than I have endeavoured to make them appear. We had taken a little dinner with us in a basket, and invited them to partake of it, which the mother refused to do, both for herself and children, saying it was with them a fast-day; adding diffidently, that whether such observances were right or wrong, she felt it her duty to keep them strictly. The Jews, who are numerous on this part of the Rhine, greatly surpass the German peasantry in the beauty of their features and in the intelligence of their countenances. But the lower classes of the German peasantry have, here at least, the air of people grievously oppress. Nursing mothers, at the age of seven or eight and twenty, often look haggard and far more decayed and withered than women of Cumberland and Westmoreland twice their age. This comes from being underfed and overworked in their vineyards in a hot and glaring sun.

GENIUS of Raphael! if thy wings  
Might bear thee to this glen,  
With faithful memory left of things  
To pencil dear and pen,  
Thou wouldest forego the neighbouring  
Rhine,  
And all his majesty  
A studious forehead to incline  
O'er this poor family.

The Mother — her thou must have seen,  
In spirit, ere she came  
To dwell these rifted rocks between,  
Or found on earth a name;  
An image, too, of that sweet Boy,  
Thy inspirations give —  
Of playfulness, and love, and joy,  
Predestined here to live.

Downcast, or shooting glances far,  
How beautiful his eyes,  
That blend the nature of the star  
With that of summer skies!  
I speak as if of sense beguiled;  
Uncounted months are gone,  
Yet am I with the Jewish Child,  
That exquisite Saint John.

I see the dark-brown curls, the brow,  
The smooth transparent skin,

Refined, as with intent to show  
The holiness within;  
The grace of parting Infancy  
By blushes yet untamed;  
Age faithful to the mother's knee,  
Nor of her arms ashamed.

Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet  
As flowers, stand side by side;  
Their soul-subduing looks might cheat  
The Christian of his pride:  
Such beauty hath the Eternal poured  
Upon them not forlorn,  
Though of a lineage once abhorred,  
Nor yet redeemed from scorn.

Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite  
Of poverty and wrong,  
Doth here preserve a living light,  
From Hebrew fountains sprung;  
That gives this ragged group to cast  
Around the dell a gleam  
Of Palestine, of glory past,  
And proud Jerusalem!

## THE GLEANER

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE

1828. 1829

This poem was first printed in the *Annual* called the *Keepsake*. The painter's name I am not sure of, but I think it was Holmes.

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,  
Those locks from summer's golden skies,  
That o'er thy brow are shed;  
That cheek — a kindling of the morn,  
That lip — a rose-bud from the thorn,  
I saw; and Fancy sped  
To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through  
soft air,  
Of bliss that grows without a care,  
And happiness that never flies —  
(How can it where love never dies?)  
Whispering of promise, where no blight  
Can reach the innocent delight;  
Where pity, to the mind conveyed  
In pleasure, is the darkest shade  
That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings  
From his smoothly gliding wings.  
What mortal form, what earthly face  
Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,  
And mingle colours, that should breed  
Such rapture, nor want power to feed;



For had thy charge been idle flowers,  
Fair Damsel ! o'er my captive mind,  
To truth and sober reason blind,  
'Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,  
The sweet illusion might have hung, for  
hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,  
That touchingly bespeaks thee born  
Life's daily tasks with them to share  
Who, whether from their lowly bed  
They rise, or rest the weary head, 30  
Ponder the blessing they entreat  
From Heaven, and *feel* what they repeat,  
While they give utterance to the prayer  
That asks for daily bread.

### ON THE POWER OF SOUND

1828. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. I have often regretted that my tour in Ireland, chiefly performed in the short days of October in a Carriage-and-four (I was with Mr. Marshall), supplied my memory with so few images that were new, and with so little motive to write. The lines however in this poem, "Thou too be heard, lone eagle!" were suggested near the Giant's Causeway, or rather at the promontory of Fairhead, where a pair of eagles wheeled above our heads and darted off as if to hide themselves in a blaze of sky made by the setting sun.

#### ARGUMENT

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual functionary, in communion with sounds, individual, or combined in studied harmony — Sources and effects of those sounds (to the close of 6th Stanza) — The power of music, whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiot — Origin of music, and its effect in early ages — How produced (to the middle of 10th Stanza) — The mind recalled to sounds acting casually and severally — Wish uttered (11th Stanza) that these could be united into a scheme or system for moral interests and intellectual contemplation — (Stanza 12th) The Pythagorean theory of numbers and music, with their supposed power over the motions of the universe — Imaginations consonant with such a theory — Wish expressed (in 11th Stanza) realised, in some degree, by the representation of all sounds under the form of thanksgiving to the Creator — (Last Stanza) The destruction of earth and the planetary system — The survival of audible harmony, and its support in the Divine Nature, as revealed in Holy Writ.

I  
Thy functions are ethereal,  
As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind,  
Organ of vision ! And a Spirit aerial  
Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and blind;  
Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thought  
To enter than oracular cave;  
Strict passage, through which sighs are  
brought,  
And whispers for the heart, their slave;  
And shrieks, that revel in abuse  
Of shivering flesh; and warbled air, 10  
Whose piercing sweetness can unloose  
The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile  
Into the ambush of despair;  
Hosannas, pealing down the long-drawn  
aisle,  
And requiems answered by the pulse that  
beats  
Devotly, in life's last retreats !

#### II

The headlong streams and fountains  
Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with untired  
powers;  
Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian moun-  
tains,  
They hull perchance ten thousand thousand  
flowers. 20  
That roar, the prowling lion's *Here I am*,  
How fearful to the desert wide !  
That bleat, how tender ! of the dam  
Calling a straggler to her side.  
Shout, cuckoo ! — let the vernal soul  
Go with thee to the frozen zone;  
Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-bird,  
toll !  
At the still hour to Mercy dear,  
Mercy from her twilight throne  
Listening to nun's faint throb of holy fear,  
To sailor's prayer breathed from a darken-  
ing sea, 31  
Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

#### III

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows  
And Images of voice — to hound and horn  
From rocky steep and rock-bestudded mea-  
dows  
Flung back, and, in the sky's blue caves,  
reborn —  
On with your pastime ! till the church-tower  
bells  
A greeting give of measured glee;  
And milder echoes from their cells

Repeat the bridal symphony.  
 Then, or far earlier, let us rove  
 Where mists are breaking up or gone,  
 And from aloft look down into a cove  
 Besprinkled with a careless quire,  
 Happy milk-maids, one by one  
 Scattering a ditty each to her desire,  
 A liquid concert matchless by nice Art,  
 A stream as if from one full heart.

## IV

Blest be the song that brightens  
 The blind man's gloom, exalts the veteran's  
 mirth;  
 Unscorned the peasant's whistling breath,  
 that lightens  
 His duteous toil of furrowing the green  
 earth.  
 For the tired slave, Song lifts the languid  
 oar,  
 And bids it aptly fall, with chime  
 That beautifies the fairest shore,  
 And mitigates the harshest clime.  
 Yon pilgrims see — in lagging file  
 They move; but soon the appointed way  
 A choral *Ave Marie* shall beguile,  
 And to their hope the distant shrine  
 Glisten with a livelier ray:  
 Nor friendless he, the prisoner of the  
 mine,  
 Who from the well-spring of his own clear  
 breast  
 Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

## V

When civic renovation  
 Dawns on a kingdom, and for needful haste  
 Best eloquence avails not, Inspiration  
 Mounts with a tune, that travels like a  
 blast  
 Piping through cave and battlemented  
 tower;  
 Then starts the sluggard, pleased to meet  
 That voice of Freedom, in its power  
 Of promises, shrill, wild, and sweet!  
 Who, from a martial *pageant*, spreads  
 Incitements of a battle-day,  
 Thrilling the unweaponed crowd with  
 plumeless heads? —  
 Even She whose Lydian airs inspire  
 Peaceful striving, gentle play  
 Of timid hope and innocent desire  
 Shot from the dancing Graces, as they  
 move,  
 Fanned by the plausive wings of Love.

## VI

How oft along thy mazes,  
 Regent of sound, have dangerous Passions  
 trod!  
 O Thou, through whom the temple rings  
 with praises,  
 And blackening clouds in thunder speak of  
 God,  
 Betray not by the cozenage of sense  
 Thy votaries, wooingly resigned  
 To a voluptuous influence  
 That taints the purer, better, mind;  
 But lead sick Fancy to a harp  
 That hath in noble tasks been tried;  
 And, if the virtuous feel a pang too sharp,  
 Soothe it into patience, — stay  
 The uplifted arm of Suicide;  
 And let some mood of thine in firm array  
 Knit every thought the impending issue  
 needs,  
 Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds!

## VII

As Conscience, to the centre  
 Of being, smites with irresistible pain  
 So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter  
 The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot's brain,  
 Transmute him to a wretch from quiet  
 hurled —  
 Convulsed as by a jarring din;  
 And then aghast, as at the world  
 Of reason partially let in  
 By concords winding with a sway  
 Terrible for sense and soul!  
 Or, awed he weeps, struggling to quell  
 dismay.  
 Point not these mysteries to an Art  
 Lodged above the starry pole;  
 Pure modulations flowing from the heart  
 Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty,  
 Truth  
 With Order dwell, in endless youth?

## VIII

Oblivion may not cover  
 All treasures hoarded by the miser, Time,  
 Orphean Insight! truth's undaunted lover,  
 To the first leagues of tutored passion climb,  
 When Music deigned within this grosser  
 sphere  
 Her subtle essence to enfold,  
 And voice and shell drew forth a tear  
 Softer than Nature's self could mould.  
 Yet strenuous was the infant Age:  
 Art, daring because souls could feel,

Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage  
 Of rapt imagination sped her march  
 Through the realms of woe and weal:  
 Hell to the lyre bowed low; the upper  
     arch  
 Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic  
     verse  
 Her wan disasters could disperse.

## IX

The GIFT to king Amphion  
 That walled a city with its melody <sup>130</sup>  
 Was for belief no dream:—thy skill,  
     Arion!  
 Could humanise the creatures of the sea,  
 Where men were monsters. A last grace  
     he craves,  
 Leave for one chant;— the dulcet sound  
 Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,  
 And listening dolphins gather round.  
 Self-cast, as with a desperate course,  
 'Mid that strange audience, he bestrides  
 A proud One docile as a managed horse;  
 And singing, while the accordant hand <sup>140</sup>  
 Sweeps his harp, the Master rides;  
 So shall he touch at length a friendly  
     strand,  
 And he, with his preserver, shine star-  
     bright  
 In memory, through silent night.

## X

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds  
 Couched in the shadow of Mænanian pines,  
 Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the  
     leopards,  
 That in high triumph drew the Lord of  
     vines,  
 How did they sparkle to the cymbal's  
     clang!  
 While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground <sup>150</sup>  
 In cadence, -- and Silenus swang  
 This way and that, with wild-flowers  
     crowned.  
 To life, to life give back thine ear:  
 Ye who are longing to be rid  
 Of fable, though to truth subservient, hear  
 The little sprinkling of cold earth that  
     fell  
 Echoed from the coffin-lid;  
 The convict's summons in the steeple's  
     knell;  
 "The vain distress-gun," from a leeward  
     shore,  
 Repeated — heard, and heard no more! <sup>160</sup>

## XI

For terror, joy, or pity,  
 Vast is the compass and the swell of notes:  
 From the babe's first cry to voice of regal  
     city,  
 Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that floats  
 Far as the woodlands — with the trill to  
     blend  
 Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale  
 Might tempt an angel to descend,  
 While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.  
 Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no  
     scheme,  
 No scale of moral music — to unite <sup>170</sup>  
 Powers that survive but in the faintest  
     dream  
 Of memory? — O that ye might stoop to  
     bear  
 Chains, such precious chains of sight  
 As laboured minstrelsies through ages  
     wear!  
 O for a balance fit the truth to tell  
 Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well!

## XII

By one pervading spirit  
 Of tones and numbers all things are con-  
     trolled,  
 As sages taught, where faith was found to  
     merit  
 Initiation in that mystery old. <sup>180</sup>  
 The heavens, whose aspect makes our minds  
     as still  
 As they themselves appear to be,  
 Innumerable voices fill  
 With everlasting harmony;  
 The towering headlands, crowned with mist,  
 Their feet among the billows, know  
 That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;  
 Thy pinions, universal Air,  
 Ever waving to and fro,  
 Are delegates of harmony, and bear <sup>190</sup>  
 Strains that support the Seasons in their  
     round;  
 Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

## XIII

Break forth into thanksgiving,  
 Ye banded instruments of wind and chords  
 Unite, to magnify the Ever-living,  
 Your inarticulate notes with the voice of  
     words!  
 Nor hushed be service from the lowing  
     mead,  
 Nor mute the forest hum of noon;

Thou too be heard, lone eagle ! freed  
 From snowy peak and cloud, attune 200  
 Thy hungry barkings to the hymn  
 Of joy, that from her utmost walls  
 The six-days' Work, by flaming Seraphim  
 Transmits to Heaven ! As Deep to Deep  
 Shouting through one valley calls,  
 All worlds, all natures, mood and measure  
 keep  
 For praise and ceaseless gratulation, poured  
 Into the ear of God, their Lord !

## XIV

A Voice to Light gave Being;  
 To Time, and Man, his earth-born chroni- 210  
 cler;  
 A Voice shall finish doubt and dim fore-  
 seeing,  
 And sweep away life's visionary stir;  
 The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,  
 Arm at its blast for deadly wars)  
 To archangelic lips applied,  
 The grave shall open, quench the stars.  
 O Silence ! are Man's noisy years  
 No more than moments of thy life ?  
 Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles and  
 tears,  
 With her smooth tones and discords just, 220  
 Tempered into rapturous strife,  
 Thy destined bond-slave ? No ! though  
 earth be dust  
 And vanish, though the heavens dissolve,  
 her stay  
 Is in the WORD, that shall not pass away.

## INCIDENT AT BRUGES

1828. 1835

This occurred at Bruges in 1828. Mr Cole-  
 ridge, my Daughter, and I made a tour together  
 in Flanders, upon the Rhine, and returned by  
 Holland. Dora and I, while taking a walk  
 along a retired part of the town, heard the  
 voice as here described, and were afterwards  
 informed it was a Convent in which were many  
 English. We were both much touched, I might  
 say affected, and Dora moved as appears in  
 the verses.

IN Bruges town is many a street  
 Whence busy life hath fled;  
 Where, without hurry, noiseless feet  
 The grass-grown pavement tread.  
 There heard we, halting in the shade  
 Flung from a Convent-tower,

A harp that tuneful prelude made  
 To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,  
 Was fit for some gay throng; 10  
 Though from the same grim turret fell  
 The shadow and the song.  
 When silent were both voice and chords,  
 The strain seemed doubly dear,  
 Yet sad as sweet, — for *English* words  
 Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;  
 And pinnacle and spire  
 Quivered and seemed almost to heave,  
 Clothed with innocuous fire; 20  
 But, where we stood, the setting sun  
 Showed little of his state;  
 And, if the glory reached the Nun,  
 'T was through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,  
 Nor pity idly born,  
 If even a passing Stranger sighs  
 For them who do not mourn.  
 Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,  
 Captive, whoe'er thou be ! 30  
 Oh ! what is beauty, what is love,  
 And opening life to thee ?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,  
 A feeling sanctified  
 By one soft trickling tear that stole  
 From the Maiden at my side;  
 Less tribute could she pay than this,  
 Borne gaily o'er the sea,  
 Fresh from the beauty and the bliss  
 Of English liberty ? 40

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN  
A VASE

1820. 1835

They were a present from Miss Jewsbury, of  
 whom mention is made in the note at the end  
 of the next poem. The fish were healthy to  
 all appearance in their confinement for a long  
 time, but at last, for some cause we could not  
 make out, they languished, and, one of them  
 being all but dead, they were taken to the pool  
 under the old Pollard oak. The apparently  
 dying one lay on its side unable to move. I  
 used to watch it, and about the tenth day it be-  
 gan to right itself, and in a few days more was  
 able to swim about with its companions. For

many months they continued to prosper in their new place of abode; but one night by an unusually great flood they were swept out of the pool, and perished to our great regret.

THE soaring lark is blest as proud  
When at heaven's gate she sings;  
The roving bee proclaims aloud  
Her flight by vocal wings;  
While Ye, in lasting durance pent,  
Your silent lives employ  
For something more than dull content,  
Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem  
A place where joy is known,  
Where golden flash and silver gleam  
Have meanings of their own;  
While, high and low, and all about,  
Your motions, glittering Elves!  
Ye weave — no danger from without,  
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast  
Is your transparent cell;  
Where Fear is but a transient guest,  
No sullen Humours dwell;  
Where, sensitive of every ray  
That smites this tiny sea,  
Your scaly panoplies repay  
The loan with usury.

How beautiful! — Yet none knows why  
This ever-graceful change,  
Renewed — renewed incessantly —  
Within your quiet range.  
Is it that ye with conscious skill  
For mutual pleasure glide;  
And sometimes, not without your will,  
Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!  
And now, in twilight dim,  
Clustering like constellated eyes,  
In wings of Cherubin,  
When the fierce orbs abate their glare; —  
Whate'er your forms express,  
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are —  
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your nature be, 't is pure;  
Your birthright is a fence  
From all that haughtier kinds endure  
Through tyranny of sense.  
Ah! not alone by colours bright  
Are ye to heaven allied,

When, like essential Forms of light,  
Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled  
Day-thoughts while limbs repose; 50  
For moonlight fascinations mild,  
Your gift, ere shutters close —  
Accept, mute Captives! thanks and praise;  
And may this tribute prove  
That gentle admirations raise  
Delight resembling love.

## LIBERTY

(SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE)

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND; THE GOLD AND SILVER  
FISHES HAVING BEEN REMOVED TO A POOL IN  
THE PLEASURE-GROUND OF RYDAL MOUNT

1829. 1835

"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse." — COWLEY.

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind regard,  
(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is hard;  
Not soon does aught to which mild fancies cling  
In lonely spots, become a slighted thing;) Those silent Inmates now no longer share,  
Nor do they need, our hospitable care,  
Removed in kindness from their glassy Cell  
To the fresh waters of a living Well —  
An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest  
No winds disturb; the mirror of whose breast  
Is smooth as clear, save where with dimples small  
A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.  
— There swims, of blazing sun and beating shower  
Fearless (but how obscured!) the golden Power,  
That from his bauble prison used to cast  
Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpast;  
And near him, darkling like a sullen Gnome,  
The silver Tenant of the crystal dome;  
Dissevered both from all the mysteries

Of hue and altering shape that charmed all  
eyes. 20

Alas! they pined, they languished while  
they shone;

And, if not so, what matters beauty gone  
And admiration lost, by change of place  
That brings to the inward creature no dis-  
grace?

But if the change restore his birthright,  
then,

Whate'er the difference, boundless is the  
gain.

Who can divine what impulses from God  
Reach the caged lark, within a town-abode,  
From his poor inch or two of daisied sod?  
O yield him back his privilege! — No sea  
Swells like the bosom of a man set free; 31  
A wilderness is rich with liberty.

Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or keep  
Your independence in the fathomless Deep!  
Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail;  
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshening  
gale!

If unimproved the ambitious eagle mount  
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,  
Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width, shall  
he,

Till the world perishes, a field for thee! 40  
While musing here I sit in shadow cool,  
And watch these mute Companions, in the  
pool,

(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)  
By glimpses caught — disporting at their  
ease,

Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,  
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a spell  
Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal  
cell;

To wheel with languid motion round and  
round,  
Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.  
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest footfall  
marred; 50

On their quick sense our sweetest music  
jarred;

And whither could they dart, if seized with  
fear?

No sheltering stone, no tangled root was  
near.

When fire or taper ceased to cheer the  
room,

They wore away the night in starless  
gloom;

And, when the sun first dawned upon the  
streams,

How faint their portion of his vital beams!  
Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,  
While not one joy of ours by them was  
shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I venture now  
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend  
brow) — 61

Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,  
Though sure of plaudits on his costly stage,  
Though fed with dainties from the snow-  
white hand

Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land,  
But gladly would escape; and, if need were,  
Scatter the colours from the plumes that  
bear

The emancipated captive through blithe air  
Into strange woods, where he at large may  
live

On best or worst which they and Nature  
give? 70

The beetle loves his unpretending track,  
The snail the house he carries on his back;  
The far-fetched worm with pleasure would  
disown

The bed we give him, though of softest  
down;

A noble instinct; in all kinds the same,  
All ranks! What Sovereign, worthy of  
the name,

If doomed to breathe against his lawful will  
An element that flatters him — to kill,  
But would rejoice to barter outward show  
For the least boon that freedom can be-  
stow? 80

But most the Bard is true to inborn  
right,

Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,  
Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch  
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,  
A natural meal — days, months, from Na-  
ture's hand;

Time, place, and business, all at his com-  
mand! —

Who bends to happier duties, who more wise  
Than the industrious Poet, taught to prize,  
Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed  
By cares in which simplicity is lost? 90  
That life — the flowery path that winds by  
stealth —

Which Horace needed for his spirit's health;  
Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome  
By noise and strife, and questions wearisome,

And the vain splendours of Imperial  
Rome? —

Let easy mirth his social hours inspire  
And fiction animate his sportive lyre,  
Attuned to verse that, crowning light Dis-  
tress

With garlands, cheats her into happiness;  
Give me the humblest note of those sad  
strains

Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded  
chains,

As a chance-sunbeam from his memory  
fell

Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well;  
Or when the prattle of Blandusia's spring  
Haunted his ear — he only listening —  
He, proud to please, above all rivals, fit  
To win the palm of gaiety and wit;  
He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,  
Shrinking from each new favour to be  
shed,

By the world's Ruler, on his honoured  
head!

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,  
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen  
Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid  
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade;  
A doleful bower for penitential song,  
Where Man and Muse complained of mu-  
tual wrong;

While Cam's ideal current glided by,  
And antique towers nodded their foreheads  
high,

Citadels dear to studious privacy.  
But Fortune, who had long been used to  
sport

With this tried Servant of a thankless Court,  
Relenting met his wishes; and to you  
The remnant of his days at least was true;  
You, whom, though long deserted, he loved  
best;

You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest!

Far happier they who, fixing hope and  
aim

On the humanities of peaceful fame,  
Enter betimes with more than martial fire  
The generous course, aspire, and still aspire;  
Upheld by warnings heeded not too late  
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,  
And to one purpose cleave, their Being's  
godlike mate!

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid  
brow

That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep thy  
vow;

With modest scorn reject whate'er would  
blind

The ethereal eyesight, cramp the winged  
mind!

Then, with a blessing granted from above  
To every act, word, thought, and look of  
love,

Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till  
age

Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest  
page.

## HUMANITY

1829. 1835

These verses and those entitled "Liberty" were composed as one piece, which Mrs. Wordsworth complained of as unwieldy and ill-proportioned; and accordingly it was divided into two on her judicious recommendation.

The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own  
appeal

To righteous Gods when man has ceased to  
feel,

Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,  
Before the STONE OF POWER no longer  
stand —

To take his sentence from the balanced  
Block,

As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock;  
Though, in the depths of sunless groves, no  
more

The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore;  
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering  
trees

Do still perform mysterious offices!

And functions dwell in beast and bird that  
sway

The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,  
Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes

To watch for undelusive auguries: —

Not uninspired appear their simplest ways;  
Their voices mount symbolical of praise —

To mix with hymns that Spirits make and  
hear;

And to fallen man their innocence is dear.

Enraptured Art draws from those sacred  
springs

Streams that reflect the poetry of things!

Where christian Martyrs stand in hues  
portrayed,

That, might a wish avail, would never fade;  
 Borne in their hands the lily and the palm  
 Shed round the altar a celestial calm;  
 There, too, behold the lamb and guileless  
 dove

Prest in the tenderness of virgin love  
 To saintly bosoms ! — Glorious is the blend-  
 ing

Of right affections climbing or descending  
 Along a scale of light and life, with cares  
 Alternate; carrying holy thoughts and  
 prayers <sup>30</sup>

Up to the sovereign seat of the Most High;  
 Descending to the worm in charity;  
 Like those good Angels whom a dream of  
 night

Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight,  
 All, while *he* slept, treading the pendent  
 stairs

Earthward or heavenward, radiant mes-  
 sengers,

That, with a perfect will in one accord  
 Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty  
 Lord;

And with untired humility forbore  
 To speed their errand by the wings they  
 wore. <sup>40</sup>

What a fair world were ours for verse to  
 paint,

If Power could live at ease with self-re-  
 straint !

Opinion bow before the naked sense  
 Of the great Vision, — faith in Providence;  
 Merciful over all his creatures, just  
 To the least particle of sentient dust:

But, fixing by immutable decrees,  
 Seedtime and harvest for his purposes !  
 Then would be closed the restless oblique  
 eye

That looks for evil like a treacherous spy ; <sup>50</sup>  
 Disputes would then relax, like stormy winds  
 That into breezes sink ; impetuous minds  
 By discipline endeavour to grow meek  
 As Truth herself, whom they profess to seek.  
 Then Genius, shunning fellowship with  
 Pride,

Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's  
 side;

Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice;  
 And not alone *harsh* tyranny would cease,  
 But unoffending creatures find release  
 From qualified oppression, whose defence <sup>60</sup>  
 Rests on a hollow plea of recompence;  
 Thought-tempered wrongs, for each humane  
 respect

Oft worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.  
 Witness those glances of indignant scorn  
 From some high-minded Slave, impelled to  
 spurn

The kindness that would make him less  
 forlorn;

Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,  
 His look of pitiable gratitude !

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,  
 Whose day departs in pomp, returns with  
 smiles — <sup>70</sup>

To greet the flowers and fruitage of a land,  
 As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes  
 fanned;

A land whose azure mountain-tops are seats  
 For Gods in council, whose green vales,  
 retreats

Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling there  
 To breathe the Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the  
 grave,

Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a  
 slave.

Shall man assume a property in man ?  
 Lay on the moral will a withering ban ? <sup>80</sup>

Shame that our laws at distance still protect  
 Enormities, which they at home reject !

"Slaves cannot breathe in England" — yet  
 that boast

Is but a mockery ! when from coast to coast,  
 Though *jittered* slave be none, her floors  
 and soil

Groan underneath a weight of slavish toil,  
 For the poor Many, measured out by rules  
 Fetched with cupidity from heartless  
 schools,

That to an Idol, falsely called "the Wealth  
 Of Nations," sacrifice a People's health, <sup>90</sup>  
 Body and mind and soul; a thirst so keen

Is ever urging on the vast machine  
 Of sleepless Labour, 'mid whose dizzy  
 wheels

The Power least prized is that which *thinks*  
 and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age,  
 And all the heavy or light vassalage

Which for their sakes we fasten, as may  
 suit

Our varying moods, on human kind or  
 brute.

"T were well in little, as in great, to pause,  
 Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws. <sup>100</sup>

Not from his fellows only man may learn  
 Rights to compare and duties to discern !

All creatures and all objects, in degree,



Are friends and patrons of humanity.  
There are to whom the garden, grove, and  
field,

Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;  
Who would not lightly violate the grace  
The lowliest flower possesses in its place;  
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,  
Which nothing less than Infinite Power  
could give. 110

"THIS LAWN, A CARPET ALL  
ALIVE"

1829. 1835

This Lawn is the sloping one approaching the kitchen-garden, and was made out of it. Hundreds of times have I watched the dancing of shadows amid a press of sunshine, and other beautiful appearances of light and shade, flowers and shrubs. What a contrast between this and the cabbages and onions and carrots that used to grow there on a piece of ugly-shaped unsightly ground! No reflection, however, either upon cabbages or onions; the latter we know were worshipped by the Egyptians, and he must have a poor eye for beauty who has not observed how much of it there is in the form and colour which cabbages and plants of that genus exhibit through the various stages of their growth and decay. A richer display of colour in vegetable nature can scarcely be conceived than Coleridge, my Sister, and I saw in a bed of potato-plants in blossom near a hut upon the moor between Inversneyd and Loch Katrine. These blossoms were of such extraordinary beauty and richness that no one could have passed them without notice. But the sense must be cultivated through the mind before we can perceive these inexhaustible treasures of Nature, for such they really are, without the least necessary reference to the utility of her productions, or even to the laws whereupon, as we learn by research, they are dependent. Some are of opinion that the habit of analysing, decomposing, and anatomising is inevitably unfavourable to the perception of beauty. People are led into this mistake by overlooking the fact that, such processes being to a certain extent within the reach of a limited intellect, we are apt to ascribe to them that insensibility of which they are in truth the effect and not the cause. Admiration and love, to which all knowledge truly vital must tend, are felt by men of real genius in proportion as their discoveries in natural Philosophy are enlarged; and the beauty in form of a plant or an animal is not made less but more apparent as a whole by more accurate insight into its constituent

properties and powers. A *Savant* who is not also a poet in soul and a religionist in heart is a feeble and unhappy creature.

THIS LAWN, a carpet all alive  
With shadows flung from leaves — to strive  
In dance, amid a press  
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields  
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields  
Of strenuous idleness;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze  
Encounter, and to narrow seas  
Forbid a moment's rest;  
The medley less when boreal Lights  
Glance to and fro, like airy Sprites  
To feats of arms address!

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,  
This ceaseless play, the genuine life  
That serves the steadfast hours,  
Is in the grass beneath, that grows  
Unheeded, and the mute repose  
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

THOUGHT ON THE SEASONS

1829. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount.

FLATTERED with promise of escape  
From every hurtful blast,  
Spring takes, O sprightly May! thy shape,  
Her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is summer riding high  
In fierce solstitial power,  
Less fair than when a lenient sky  
Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves  
The labours of the plough,  
And ripening fruits and forest leaves  
All brighten on the bough;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,  
Before she hears the sound  
Of winter rushing in, to close  
The emblematic round!

Such be our Spring, our Summer such;  
So may our Autumn blend  
With hoary Winter, and Life touch,  
Through heaven-born hope, her end!

A GRAVESTONE UPON THE  
FLOOR IN THE CLOISTERS  
OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

1829. 1829

"*Miserrimus.*" Many conjectures have been formed as to the person who lies under this stone. Nothing appears to be known for a certainty. Query — The Rev. Mr. Morris, a nonconformist, a sufferer for conscience-sake; a worthy man who, having been deprived of his benefice after the accession of William III., lived to an old age in extreme destitution, on the alms of charitable Jacobites.

"*MISERRIMUS,*" and neither name nor date,  
Prayer, text, or symbol, graven upon the stone;  
Nought but that word assigned to the unknown,  
That solitary word — to separate  
From all, and cast a cloud around the fate  
Of him who lies beneath. Most wretched one,  
*Who* chose his epitaph? — Himself alone  
Could thus have dared the grave to agitate,  
And claim, among the dead, this awful crown;  
Nor doubt that He marked also for his own  
Close to these cloistral steps a burial-place,  
That every foot might fall with heavier tread,  
Trampling upon his vileness. Stranger,  
pass  
Softly! — To save the contrite, Jesus bled.

A TRADITION OF OKER HILL  
IN DARLEY DALE, DERBY-  
SHIRE

1829. 1829

This pleasing tradition was told me by the coachman at whose side I sate while he drove down the dale, he pointing to the trees on the hill as he related the story.

'T is said that to the brow of yon fair hill  
Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face  
from face,  
Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still  
Or feed, each planted on that lofty place  
A chosen Tree; then, eager to fulfil  
Their courses, like two new-born rivers,  
they  
In opposite directions urged their way

Down from the far-seen mount. No blast  
might kill  
Or blight that fond memorial; — the trees  
grew,  
And now entwine their arms; but ne'er  
again  
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide  
plain;  
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew  
Until their spirits mingled in the sea  
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE

1830. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount.

The subject of the following poem is from the *Orlandus* of the author's friend, Kenelm Henry Digby: and the liberty is taken of inscribing it to him as an acknowledgment, however unworthy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his numerous and valuable writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of the olden time.

I

You have heard "a Spanish Lady  
How she wooed an English man;"  
Hear now of a fair Armenian,  
Daughter of the proud Soldan;  
How she loved a Christian slave, and told  
her pain  
By word, look, deed, with hope that he  
might love again.

II

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"  
Said she, lifting up her veil;  
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,  
Ere it wither and grow pale." 10  
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may  
not take  
From twig or bed an humbler flower, even  
for your sake!"

III

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!  
To behold thy captive state;  
Women, in your land, may pity  
(May they not?) the unfortunate."  
"Yes, kind Lady! otherwise man could  
not bear  
Life, which to every one that breathes is  
full of care."

## IV

"Worse than idle is compassion  
 If it end in tears and sighs; 20  
 Thee from bondage would I rescue  
 And from vile indignities;  
 Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high  
 degree,  
 Look up — and help a hand that longs to  
 set thee free."

## V

"Lady! dread the wish, nor venture  
 In such peril to engage;  
 Think how it would stir against you  
 Your most loving father's rage:  
 Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked  
 with shame,  
 Should troubles overflow on her from whom  
 it came." 30

## VI

"Generous Frank! the just in effort  
 Are of inward peace secure:  
 Hardships for the brave encountered,  
 Even the feeblest may endure:  
 If almighty grace through me thy chains  
 unbind,  
 My father for slave's work may seek a slave  
 in mind."

## VII

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,  
 My long-frozen heart grows warm!"  
 "Yet you make all courage fruitless.  
 Me to save from chance of harm: 40  
 Leading such companion I that gilded dome,  
 Yon minarets, would gladly leave for his  
 worst home."

## VIII

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair Princess,  
 And your brow is free from scorn,  
 Else these words would come like  
 mockery,  
 Sharper than the pointed thorn."  
 "Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too  
 wide apart  
 Our faith hath been, — O would that eyes  
 could see the heart!"

## IX

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is  
 These base implements to wield; 50  
 Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,  
 Ne'er assail my cobwebbed shield!

Never see my native land, nor castle tow-  
 ers,  
 Nor Her who thinking of me there counts  
 widowed hours."

## X

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies;  
 Wedded? If you *can*, say no!  
 Blessed is and be your consort;  
 Hopes I cherished — let them go!  
 Handmaid's privilege would leave my pur-  
 pose free,  
 Without another link to my felicity." 60

## XI

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,  
 Lady, is a mystery rare;  
 Body, heart, and soul in union,  
 Make one being of a pair."  
 "Humble love in me would look for no re-  
 turn,  
 Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but can-  
 not burn."

## XII

"Gracious Allah! by such title  
 Do I dare to thank the God,  
 Him who thus exalts thy spirit,  
 Flower of an unchristian sod! 70  
 Or hast thou put off wings which thou in  
 heaven dost wear?  
 What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt?  
 where am I? where?"

## XIII

Here broke off the dangerous converse:  
 Less impassioned words might tell  
 How the pair escaped together,  
 Tears not wanting, nor a knell  
 Of sorrow in her heart while through her  
 father's door,  
 And from her narrow world, she passed for  
 evermore.

## XIV

But affections higher, holier,  
 Urged her steps; she shrunk from  
 trust 80  
 In a sensual creed that trampled  
 Woman's birthright into dust.  
 Little be the wonder then, the blame be  
 none,  
 If she, a timid Maid, hath put such bold-  
 ness on.

## XV

Judge both Fugitives with knowledge:  
In those old romantic days  
Mighty were the soul's commandments  
To support, restrain, or raise.  
Foes might hang upon their path, snakes  
rustle near,  
But nothing from their inward selves had  
they to fear. 90

## XVI

Thought infirm ne'er came between  
them,  
Whether printing desert sands  
With accordant steps, or gathering  
Forest-fruit with social hands;  
Or whispering like two reeds that in the  
cold moonbeam  
Bend with the breeze their heads, beside a  
crystal stream.

## XVII

On a friendly deck reposing  
They at length for Venice steer;  
There, when they had closed their  
voyage 100  
One, who daily on the pier  
Watched for tidings from the East, beheld  
his Lord,  
Fell down and clasped his knees for joy,  
not uttering word.

## XVIII

Mutual was the sudden transport;  
Breathless questions followed fast,  
Years contracting to a moment,  
Each word greedier than the last;  
"Hie thee to the Countess, friend! return  
with speed,  
And of this Stranger speak, by whom her  
lord was freed

## XIX

Say that I, who might have languished,  
Drooped and pined till life was spent,  
Now before the gates of Stolberg 111  
My Deliverer would present  
For a crowning recompence, the precious  
grace  
Of her who in my heart still holds her an-  
cient place.

## XX

Make it known that my Companion  
Is of royal eastern blood,

Thirsting after all perfection,  
Innocent, and meek, and good,  
Though with misbelievers bred; but that  
dark night  
Will holy Church disperse by means of  
gospel-light." 120

## XXI

Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,  
Soon returned a trusty Page  
Charged with greetings, benedictions,  
Thanks and praises, each a gage  
For a sunny thought to cheer the Stranger's  
way,  
Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears  
allay.

## XXII

And how blest the Reunited,  
While beneath their castle-walls,  
Runs a deafening noise of welcome! —  
Blest, though every tear that falls 130  
Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,  
And makes a meeting seem most like a  
dear farewell.

## XXIII

Through a haze of human nature,  
Glorified by heavenly light,  
Looked the beautiful Deliverer  
On that overpowering sight,  
While across her virgin cheek pure blushes  
strayed,  
For every tender sacrifice her heart had  
made.

## XXIV

On the ground the weeping Countess  
Knelt, and kissed the Stranger's hand;  
Act of soul-devoted homage, 141  
Pledge of an eternal band:  
Nor did aught of future days that kiss  
belie,  
Which, with a generous shout, the crowd  
did ratify.

## XXV

Constant to the fair Armenian,  
Gentle pleasures round her moved,  
Like a tutelary spirit  
Reverenced, like a sister, loved,  
Christian meekness smoothed for all the  
path of life,  
Who, loving most, should wiseliest love,  
their only strife. 150

## XXVI

Mute memento of that union  
 In a Saxon church survives,  
 Where a cross-legged Knight lies sculptured  
 As between two wedded wives —  
 Figures with armorial signs of race and birth,  
 And the vain rank the pilgrims bore while yet on earth.

## THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE

1830. 1835

Early in life this story had interested me,  
 and I often thought it would make a pleasing  
 subject for an opera or musical drama

## PART I

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes  
 Like harebells bathed in dew,  
 Of cheek that with carnation vies,  
 And veins of violet hue;  
 Earth wants not beauty that may scorn  
 A likening to frail flowers;  
 Yea, to the stars, if they were born  
 For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold unbarred,  
 Stepped One at dead of night, 10  
 Whom such high beauty could not guard  
 From meditated blight;  
 By stealth she passed, and fled as fast  
 As doth the hunted fawn,  
 Nor stopped, till in the dappling east  
 Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,  
 Seven nights her course renewed,  
 Sustained by what her scrip might yield,  
 Or berries of the wood; 20  
 At length, in darkness travelling on,  
 When lowly doors were shut,  
 The haven of her hope she won,  
 Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof  
 I come," said she, "from far;  
 For I have left my Father's roof,  
 In terror of the Czar."  
 No answer did the Matron give,  
 No second look she cast, 30

But hung upon the Fugitive,  
 Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat  
 Beside the glimmering fire,  
 Bathed duteously her wayworn feet,  
 Prevented each desire: —  
 The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed,  
 And on that simple bed,  
 Where she in childhood had reposed,  
 Now rests her weary head. 40

When she, whose couch had been the sod,  
 Whose curtain, pine or thorn,  
 Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,  
 Who comforts the forlorn;  
 While over her the Matron bent  
 Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole  
 Feeling from limbs with travel spent,  
 And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,  
 And soon again was dight 50  
 In those unworthy vestments worn  
 Through long and perilous flight;  
 And "O beloved Nurse," she said,  
 "My thanks with silent tears  
 Have unto Heaven and You been paid:  
 Now listen to my fears!

"Have you forgot" — and here she  
 smiled —  
 "The babbling flatteries  
 You lavished on me when a child  
 Disporting round your knees? 60  
 I was your lambkin, and your bird,  
 Your star, your gem, your flower;  
 Light words, that were more lightly heard  
 In many a cloudless hour!

The blossom you so fondly praised  
 Is come to bitter fruit;  
 A mighty One upon me gazed;  
 I spurned his lawless suit,  
 And must be hidden from his wrath:  
 You, Foster-father dear, 70  
 Will guide me in my forward path;  
 I may not tarry here!

I cannot bring to utter woe  
 Your proved fidelity." —  
 "Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so!  
 For you we both would die."  
 "Nay, nay, I come with semblance feigned  
 And cheek embrowned by art;

Yet, being inwardly unstained,  
With courage will depart." 50

"But whither would you, could you, flee?  
A poor Man's counsel take;  
The Holy Virgin gives to me  
A thought for your dear sake;  
Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace,  
And soon shall you be led  
Forth to a safe abiding-place,  
Where never foot doth tread."

## PART II

THE dwelling of this faithful pair  
In a straggling village stood,  
For One who breathed unquiet air  
A dangerous neighbourhood;  
But wide around lay forest ground  
With thickets rough and blind;  
And pine-trees made a heavy shade  
Impervious to the wind.

And there, sequestered from the sight,  
Was spread a treacherous swamp, 15  
On which the noonday sun shed light  
As from a lonely lamp;  
And midway in the unsafe morass,  
A single Island rose  
Of firm dry ground, with healthful grass  
Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft  
This Russian vassal plied,  
That never fowler's gun, nor shaft  
Of archer, there was tried; 20  
A sanctuary seemed the spot  
From all intrusion free;  
And there he planned an artful Cot  
For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains unchecked by dread  
Of Power's far-stretching hand,  
The bold good Man his labour sped  
At nature's pure command;  
Heart-soothed, and busy as a wren,  
While, in a hollow nook, 30  
She moulds her sight-cluding den  
Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,  
The twain ere break of day  
Creep forth, and through the forest wind  
Their solitary way;

Few words they speak, nor dare to slack  
Their pace from mile to mile,  
Till they have crossed the quaking marsh  
And reached the lonely Isle. 40

The sun above the pine-trees showed  
A bright and cheerful face;  
And Ina looked for her abode,  
The promised hiding-place;  
She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled;  
No threshold could be seen,  
Nor roof, nor window; — all seemed wild  
As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,  
The front with such nice care 50  
Is masked, "if house it be or bower,"  
But in they entered are;  
As shaggy as were wall and roof  
With branches intertwined,  
So smooth was all within, air-proof,  
And delicately lined:

And hearth was there, and maple dish  
And cups in seemly rows,  
And couch — all ready to a wish 60  
For nurture or repose;  
And Heaven doth to her virtue grant  
That here she may abide  
In solitude, with every want  
By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,  
Led on in bridal state,  
E'er struggled with a heart so proud,  
Entering her palace gate:  
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,  
No saintly anchoress 70  
E'er took possession of her cell  
With deeper thankfulness.

"Father of all, upon thy care  
And mercy am I thrown;  
Be thou my safeguard!" — such her  
prayer  
When she was left alone,  
Kneeling amid the wilderness  
When joy had passed away,  
And smiles, fond efforts of distress  
To hide what they betray! 80

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,  
Diffused through form and face  
Resolves devotedly serene;  
That monumental grace

Of Faith, which doth all passions tame  
That Reason *should* control;  
And shows in the untrembling frame  
A statue of the soul.

## PART III

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy  
That Phæbus wont to wear  
The leaves of any pleasant tree  
Around his golden hair;  
Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit  
Of his imperious love,  
At her own prayer transformed, took root,  
A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn  
His brow with laurel green;  
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn  
No meaner leaf was seen;  
And poets sage, through every age,  
About their temples wound  
The bay; and conquerors thanked the Gods,  
With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time  
So far runs back the praise  
Of Beauty, that disdains to climb  
Along forbidden ways;  
That scorns temptation; power defies  
Where mutual love is not;  
And to the tomb for rescue flies  
When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votress, a fate  
More mild doth Heaven ordain  
Upon her Island desolate;  
And words, not breathed in vain,  
Might tell what intercourse she found,  
Her silence to endear;  
What birds she tamed, what flowers the  
ground  
Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all,  
Her soothed affections clung,  
A picture on the cabin wall  
By Russian usage hung —  
The Mother-maid, whose countenance  
bright  
With love abridged the day;  
And, communed with by taper light,  
Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,  
The joy in that retreat  
Might any common friendship shame,  
So high their hearts would beat;  
And to the lone Recluse, whate'er  
They brought, each visiting  
Was like the crowding of the year  
With a new burst of spring.

But, when she of her Parents thought,  
The pang was hard to bear;  
And, if with all things not enwrought,  
That trouble still is near.  
Before her flight she had not dared  
Their constancy to prove,  
Too much the heroic Daughter feared  
The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark  
The future still must be,  
Till pitying Saints conduct her bark  
Into a safer sea —  
Or gentle Nature close her eyes,  
And set her Spirit free  
From the altar of this sacrifice,  
In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-gloom  
The white swans southward passed,  
High as the pitch of their swift plumes  
Her fancy rode the blast;  
And bore her toward the fields of France  
Her Father's native land,  
To mingle in the rustic dance,  
The happiest of the band !

Of those beloved fields she oft  
Had heard her Father tell  
In praise that now with echoes soft  
Haunted her lonely cell;  
She saw the hereditary bowers,  
She heard the ancestral stream;  
The Kremlin and its haughty towers  
Forgotten like a dream !

## PART IV

THE ever-changing Moon had traced  
Twelve times her monthly round,  
When through the unfrequented Waste  
Was heard a startling sound;  
A shout thrice sent from one who chased  
At speed a wounded deer,

Bounding through branches interlaced,  
And where the wood was clear.

The fainting creature took the marsh,  
And toward the Island fled, 10  
While plovers screamed with tumult harsh  
Above his antlered head:  
This, Ina saw; and, pale with fear,  
Shrunk to her citadel;  
The desperate deer rushed on, and near  
The tangled covert fell.

Across the marsh, the game in view,  
The Hunter followed fast,  
Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew  
A death-proclaiming blast; 20  
Then, resting on her upright mind,  
Came forth the Maid -- "In me  
Behold," she said, "a stricken Hind  
Pursued by destiny !

From your deportment, Sir ! I deem  
That you have worn a sword,  
And will not hold in light esteem  
A suffering woman's word;  
There is my covert, there perchance  
I might have lain concealed, 30  
My fortunes hid, my countenance  
Not even to you revealed.

Tears might be shed, and I might pray,  
Crouching and terrified,  
That what has been unveiled to-day,  
You would in mystery hide;  
But I will not defile with dust  
The knee that bends to adore  
The God in heaven; attend, be just;  
This ask I, and no more ! 40

I speak not of the winter's cold,  
For summer's heat exchanged,  
While I have lodged in this rough hold,  
From social life estranged;  
Nor yet of trouble and alarms:  
High Heaven is my defence;  
And every season has soft arms  
For injured Innocence.

From Moscow to the Wilderness  
It was my choice to come, 50  
Lest virtue should be harbourless,  
And honour want a home;  
And happy were I, if the Czar  
Retain his lawless will,

To end life here like this poor deer,  
Or a lamb on a green hill."

"Are you the Maid," the Stranger cried,  
"From Gallic parents sprung,  
Whose vanishing was rumoured wide,  
Sad theme for every tongue; 60  
Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest ?  
You, Lady, forced to wear  
These rude habiliments, and rest  
Your head in this dark lair !"

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled;  
And in her face and mien  
The soul's pure brightness he beheld  
Without a veil between:  
He loved, he hoped, — a holy flame  
Kindled mid rapturous tears; 70  
The passion of a moment came  
As on the wings of years.

"Such bounty is no gift of chance,"  
Exclaimed he; "righteous Heaven,  
Preparing your deliverance,  
To me the charge hath given.  
The Czar tull oft in words and deeds  
Is stormy and self-willed;  
But, when the Lady Catherine pleads,  
His violence is stilled. 80

Leave open to my wish the course,  
And I to her will go;  
From that humane and heavenly source,  
Good, only good, can flow."  
Faint sanction given, the Cavalier  
Was eager to depart,  
Though question followed question, dear,  
To the Maiden's filial heart. 90

Light was his step, — his hopes, more light,  
Kept pace with his desires; 90  
And the fifth morning gave him sight  
Of Moscow's glittering spires.  
He sued: — heart-smitten by the wrong,  
To the lorn Fugitive  
The Emperor sent a pledge as strong  
As sovereign power could give.

O more than mighty change ! If e'er  
Amazement rose to pain, 50  
And joy's excess produced a fear  
Of something void and vain; 100  
'T was when the Parents, who had mourned  
So long the lost as dead,



Beheld their only Child returned,  
The household floor to tread.

Soon gratitude gave way to love  
Within the Maiden's breast;  
Delivered and Deliverer move  
In bridal garments drest;  
Meek Catherine had her own reward;  
The Czar bestowed a dower; 110  
And universal Moscow shared  
The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground; the nuptial  
feast  
Was held with costly state;  
And there, 'mid many a noble guest,  
The Foster-parents sate;  
Encouraged by the imperial eye,  
They shrank not into shade;  
Great was their bliss, the honour high  
To them and nature paid!

### THE EGYPTIAN MAID

OR, THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER  
LILY

1830. 1835

For the names and persons in the following poem, see the *History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table*; for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.

In addition to the short notice prefixed to this poem it may be worth while here to say that it rose out of a few words casually used in conversation by my nephew Henry Hutchinson. He was describing with great spirit the appearance and movement of a vessel which he seemed to admire more than any other he had ever seen, and said her name was the *Water Lily*. This plant has been my delight from my boyhood, as I have seen it floating on the lake; and that conversation put me upon constructing and composing the poem. Had I not heard those words it would never have been written. The form of the stanza is new, and is nothing but a repetition of the first five lines as they were thrown off, and is not perhaps well suited to narrative, and certainly would not have been trusted to had I thought at the be-

ginning that the poem would have gone to such a length.

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,  
Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,  
The pleased Enchanter was aware  
Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in air,  
Yet was she work of mortal hands,  
And took from men her name — THE  
WATER LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew;  
And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill  
ascendant,  
Grows from a little edge of light  
To a full orb, this Pinnace bright 10  
Became, as nearer to the coast she drew,  
More glorious, with spread sail and stream-  
ing pendant.

Upon this winged Shape so fair  
Sage Merlin gazed with admiration:  
Her lineaments, thought he, surpass  
Aught that was ever shown in magic  
glass;  
Was ever built with patient care;  
Or, at a touch, produced by happiest trans-  
formation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill  
Shames the degenerate grasp of modern  
science, 20  
Grave Merlin (and belike the more  
For practising occult and perilous lore)  
Was subject to a freakish will  
That sapped good thoughts, or scared them  
with defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast  
An altered look upon the advancing  
Stranger  
Whom he had hailed with joy, and cried,  
" My Art shall help to tame her pride — "  
Anon the breeze became a blast,  
And the waves rose, and sky portended  
danger. 30

With thrilling word, and potent sign  
Traced on the beach, his work the Sor-  
cerer urges;  
The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,  
Like spiteful Fiends that vanish, crossed  
By Fiends of aspect more malign;  
And the winds roused the Deep with fiercer  
scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore  
 Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant Gal-  
 ley;  
 Supreme in loveliness and grace  
 Of motion, whether in the embrace 40  
 Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er  
 The main flood roughened into hill and  
 valley.

Behold, how wantonly she laves  
 Her sides, the Wizard's craft confound-  
 ing;  
 Like something out of Ocean sprung  
 To be for ever fresh and young,  
 Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge waves  
 Top-gallant high, rebounding and rebound-  
 ing!

But Ocean under magic heaves,  
 And cannot spare the Thing he cherished:  
 Ah! what avails that she was fair, 51  
 Luminous, blithe, and debonair?  
 The storm has stripped her of her leaves;  
 The Lily floats no longer! — She hath  
 perished.

Grieve for her, — she deserves no less;  
 So like, yet so unlike, a living Creature!  
 No heart had she, no busy brain;  
 Though loved, she could not love again;  
 Though pitied, *feel* her own distress;  
 Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of  
 Nature. 60

Yet is there cause for gushing tears;  
 So richly was this Galley laden,  
 A fairer than herself she bore,  
 And, in her struggles, cast ashore;  
 A lovely One, who nothing hears  
 Of wind or wave — a meek and guileless  
 Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled  
 From mischief, caused by spells himself  
 had muttered;  
 And while, repentant all too late,  
 In moody posture there he sate, 70  
 He heard a voice, and saw, with half-  
 raised head,  
 A Visitant by whom these words were  
 uttered;

"On Christian service this frail Bark  
 Sailed" (hear me, Merlin!) "under  
 high protection,

Though on her prow a sign of heathen  
 power  
 Was carved — a Goddess with a Lily  
 flower,  
 The old Egyptian's emblematic mark  
 Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

Her course was for the British strand;  
 Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless; 80  
 God reigns above, and Spirits strong  
 May gather to avenge this wrong  
 Done to the Princess, and her Land  
 Which she in duty left, sad but not cheer-  
 less.

And to Caerleon's loftiest tower  
 Soon will the Knights of Arthur's Table  
 A cry of lamentation send;  
 And all will weep who there attend,  
 To grace that Stranger's bridal hour,  
 For whom the sea was made unnavigable.

Shame! should a Child of royal line 91  
 Die through the blindness of thy  
 malice?"  
 Thus to the Necromancer spake  
 Nina, the Lady of the Lake,  
 A gentle Sorceress, and benign,  
 Who ne'er embittered any good man's  
 chalice.

"What boots," continued she, "to  
 mourn?  
 To expiate thy sin endeavour:  
 From the bleak isle where she is laid,  
 Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid  
 May yet to Arthur's court be borne 101  
 Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

My pearly Boat, a shining Light,  
 That brought me down that sunless  
 river,  
 Will bear me on from wave to wave,  
 And back with her to this sea-cave; —  
 Then Merlin! for a rapid flight  
 Through air, to thee my Charge will I  
 deliver.

The very swiftest of thy cars  
 Must, when my part is done, be ready;  
 Meanwhile, for further guidance, look 111  
 Into thy own prophetic book;  
 And, if that fail, consult the Stars  
 To learn thy course; farewell! be prompt  
 and steady."

This scarcely spoken, she again  
 Was seated in her gleaming shallop,  
 That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,  
 Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,  
 Or like a steed, without a rein,  
 Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive  
 gallop. 120

Soon did the gentle Nina reach  
 That Isle without a house or haven;  
 Landing, she found not what she sought,  
 Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught  
 But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach  
 By the fierce waves, a flower in marble  
 graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while !  
 For gently each from each retreating  
 With backward curve, the leaves revealed  
 The bosom half, and half concealed, 130  
 Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile  
 On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful  
 greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,  
 Of tortured hope and purpose shaken;  
 Following the margin of a bay,  
 She spied the lonely Castaway,  
 Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,  
 But with closed eyes, — of breath and bloom  
 forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,  
 With tenderness and mild emotion, 140  
 The Damsel, in that trance embound;  
 And, while she raised her from the  
 ground,  
 And in the pearly shallop placed,  
 Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs  
 Of music opened, and there came a  
 blending  
 Of fragrance, underived from earth,  
 With gleams that owed not to the sun  
 their birth,  
 And that soft rustling of invisible wings  
 Which Angels make, on works of love de-  
 scending. 150

And Nina heard a sweeter voice  
 Than if the Goddess of the flower had  
 spoken:  
 "Thou hast achieved, fair Dame ! what  
 none

Less pure in spirit could have done;  
 Go, in thy enterprise rejoice !  
 Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success  
 betoken."

So cheered, she left that Island bleak,  
 A bare rock of the Scilly cluster;  
 And, as they traversed the smooth brine,  
 The self-illuminated Brigantine 160  
 Shed, on the Slumberer's cold wan cheek  
 And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they  
 came  
 To the dim cavern, whence the river  
 Issued into the salt-sea flood,  
 Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,  
 Was thus accosted by the Dame;  
 "Behold to thee my Charge I now deliver !

But where attends thy chariot —  
 where ?" —  
 Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden, 170  
 So have I done; as trusty as thy barge  
 My vehicle shall prove — O precious  
 Charge !  
 If this be sleep, how soft ! if death, how  
 fair !  
 Much have my books disclosed, but the end  
 is hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view  
 Forth from the grotto's dimmest chamber  
 Came two mute Swans, whose plumes of  
 dusky white  
 Changed, as the pair approached the  
 light,  
 Drawing an ebony car, their hue  
 (Like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift 181  
 The Princess, passive to all changes:  
 The car received her: — then up-went  
 Into the ethereal element  
 The Birds with progress smooth and swift  
 As thought, when through bright regions  
 memory ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,  
 Instructs the Swans their way to measure;  
 And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,  
 And notes of minstrelsy were heard 190  
 From rich pavilions spreading wide,  
 For some high day of long-expected plea-  
 sure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and Dames  
 Ere on firm ground the car alighted;  
 Eftsoons astonishment was past,  
 For in that face they saw the last,  
 Last lingering look of clay, that tames  
 All pride; by which all happiness is blighted.

Said Merlin, "Mighty King, fair Lords,  
 Away with feast and tilt and tourney! 200  
 Ye saw, throughout this royal House,  
 Ye heard, a rocking marvellous  
 Of turrets, and a clash of swords  
 Self-shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

Lo! by a destiny well known  
 To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow;  
 This is the wished-for Bride, the Maid  
 Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed  
 Where she by shipwreck had been thrown,  
 Ill sight! but grief may vanish ere the  
 morrow." 210

"Though vast thy power, thy words are weak,"  
 Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hateful;  
 Dutiful Child, her lot how hard!  
 Is this her piety's reward?  
 Those watery locks, that bloodless cheek!  
 O winds without remorse! O shore un-  
 grateful!

Rich robes are fretted by the moth;  
 Towers, temples, fall by stroke of thun-  
 der;  
 Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate  
 A Father's sorrow for her fate? 220  
 He will repent him of his troth;  
 His brain will burn, his stout heart split  
 asunder.

Alas! and I have caused this woe;  
 For, when my prowess from invading  
 Neighbours  
 Had freed his Realm, he plighted word  
 That he would turn to Christ our Lord,  
 And his dear Daughter on a Knight be-  
 stow  
 Whom I should choose for love and match-  
 less labours.

Her birth was heathen; but a fence  
 Of holy Angels round her hovered: 230  
 A Lady added to my court  
 So fair, of such divine report

And worship, seemed a recompence  
 For fifty kingdoms by my sword recovered

Ask not for whom, O Champions true!  
 She was reserved by me her life's be-  
 trayer;  
 She who was meant to be a bride  
 Is now a corse: then put aside  
 Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with observ-  
 ance due  
 Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to  
 lay her." 240

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close  
 Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;  
 Not froward to thy sovereign will  
 Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill  
 Wafted her hither, interpose  
 To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare  
 The secret thou art bent on keeping:  
 Here must a high attest be given,  
 What Bridegroom was for her ordained  
 by Heaven. 250  
 And in my glass significant there are  
 Of things that may to gladness turn this  
 weeping.

For this, approaching, One by One,  
 Thy Knights must touch the cold hand  
 of the Virgin;  
 So, for the favoured One, the Flower  
 may bloom  
 Once more; but, if unchangeable her  
 doom,  
 If life departed be for ever gone,  
 Some blest assurance, from this cloud  
 emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss;  
 Not with a grief that, like a vapour, rises  
 And melts; but grief devout that shall  
 endure, 261  
 And a perpetual growth secure  
 Of purposes which no false thought shall  
 cross,  
 A harvest of high hopes and noble enter-  
 prises."

"So be it," said the King; — "anon,  
 Here, where the Princess lies, begin the  
 trial;  
 Knights each in order as ye stand  
 Step forth." — To touch the pallid hand

Sir Agravaire advanced; no sign he won  
From Heaven or earth; — Sir Kaye had like  
denial. 270

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;  
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure;  
Though he, devoutest of all Champions,  
ere  
He reached that ebon car, the bier  
Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel  
lay,  
Full thrice had crossed himself in meek  
composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints! who can?)  
How in still air the balance trembled —  
The wishes, peradventure the despites  
That overcame some not ungenerous  
Knights; 280  
And all the thoughts that lengthened out  
a span  
Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assem-  
bled.

What patient confidence was here!  
And there how many bosoms panted!  
While drawing toward the car Sir Ga-  
waine, mailed  
For tournament, his beaver veiled,  
And softly touched; but, to his princely  
cheer  
And high expectancy, no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,  
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a  
brother, 290  
Came to the proof, nor grieved that there  
ensued  
No change; — the fair Izonda he had  
wooded  
With love too true, a love with pangs too  
sharp,  
From hope too distant, not to dread another.

Not so Sir Launcelot; — from Heaven's  
grace  
A sign he craved, tired slave of vain con-  
trition;  
The royal Guinever looked passing glad  
When his touch failed. — Next came Sir  
Galahad;  
He paused, and stood entranced by that  
still face  
Whose features he had seen in noontide  
vision. 300

For late, as near a murmuring stream  
He rested 'mid an arbour green and shady,  
Nina, the good Enchantress, shed  
A light around his mossy bed;  
And, at her call, a waking dream  
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he  
bowed,  
And stood, far-kenned by mantle furred  
with ermine,  
As o'er the insensate Body hung  
The enrapt, the beautiful, the young, 310  
Belief sank deep into the crowd  
That he the solemn issue would determine.

Nor deem it strange; the Youth had worn  
That very mantle on a day of glory,  
The day when he achieved that matchless  
feat,  
The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,  
Which whoso'er approached of strength  
was shorn,  
Though King or Knight the most renowned  
in story.

He touched with hesitating hand —  
And lo! those Birds, far-famed through  
Love's dominions, 320  
The Swans, in triumph clap their wings;  
And their necks play, involved in rings,  
Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy  
land; —  
"Mine is she," cried the Knight; — again  
they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she — mine she is, though  
dead,  
And to her name my soul shall cleave in  
sorrow;"  
Whereat, a tender twilight streak  
Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's  
cheek;  
And her lips, quickening with uncertain  
red,  
Seemed from each other a faint warmth to  
borrow. 330

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,  
Of love emboldened, hope with dread  
entwining,  
When, to the mouth, relenting Death  
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,  
Precursor to a timid sigh,  
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

In silence did King Arthur gaze  
 Upon the signs that pass away or tarry;  
 In silence watched the gentle strife  
 Of Nature leading back to life; 340  
 Then eased his soul at length by praise  
 Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen — the  
 blissful Mary.

Then said he, "Take her to thy heart,  
 Sir Galahad! a treasure, that God giv-  
 eth,  
 Bound by indissoluble ties to thee  
 Through mortal change and immortali-  
 ty;  
 Be happy and unenvied, thou who art  
 A goodly Knight that hath no peer that liv-  
 eth!"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed;  
 And sage tradition still rehearses 350  
 The pomp, the glory of that hour  
 When toward the altar from her bower  
 King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,  
 And Angels carolled these far-echoed  
 verses; —

Who shrinks not from alliance  
 Of evil with good Powers,  
 To God proclaims defiance,  
 And mocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted  
 From the Land of Nile did go; 360  
 Alas! the bright Ship floated,  
 An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination,  
 The Heaven-permitted vent  
 Of perblind mortal passion,  
 Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower the Form within it,  
 What served they in her need?  
 Her port she could not win it,  
 Nor from mishap be freed. 370

The tempest overcame her,  
 And she was seen no more;  
 But gently, gently, blame her —  
 She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened,  
 And kept to him her faith,  
 Till sense in death was darkened,  
 Or sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow  
 Kept watch, a viewless band; 380  
 And, billow favouring billow,  
 She reached the destined strand.

Blest Pair! whate'er befall you,  
 Your faith in Him approve  
 Who from frail earth can call you  
 To bowers of endless love!

## THE POET AND THE CAGED TURTLEDOVE

1830. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. This dove was one of a pair that had been given to my daughter by our excellent friend, Miss Jewsbury, who went to India with her husband, Mr. Fletcher, where she died of cholera. The dove survived its mate many years, and was killed, to our great sorrow, by a neighbour's cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage. These verses were composed extempore, to the letter, in the Terrace Summer-house before spoken of. It was the habit of the bird to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses.

As often as I murmur here  
 My half-formed melodies,  
 Straight from her osier mansion near,  
 The Turtle dove replies:  
 Though silent as a leaf before,  
 The captive promptly coos;  
 Is it to teach her own soft lore,  
 Or second my weak Muse?

I rather think, the gentle Dove  
 Is murmuring a reproof,  
 Displeased that I from lays of love  
 Have dared to keep aloof;  
 That I, a Bard of hill and dale,  
 Have carolled, fancy free,  
 As if nor dove nor nightingale,  
 Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear,  
 Sweet Bird! to do me wrong;  
 Love, blessed Love, is everywhere  
 The spirit of my song:  
 'Mid grove, and by the calm fireside,  
 Love animates my lyre —  
 That coo again! — 't is not to chide,  
 I feel, but to inspire.

## PRESENTIMENTS

1830. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount.

PRESENTIMENTS ! they judge not right  
Who deem that ye from open light  
Retire in fear of shame;  
All *heaven-born* Instincts shun the touch  
Of vulgar sense, — and, being such,  
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,  
The deep sigh that seemed fatherless,  
Were mine in early days;  
And now, unforced by time to part 10  
With fancy, I obey my heart,  
And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,  
Too potent over nerve and blood,  
Lurk near you — and combine  
To taint the health which ye infuse;  
This hides not from the moral Muse  
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers !  
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours 20  
Builds castles, not of air:  
Bodings unsanctioned by the will  
Flow from your visionary skill,  
And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,  
That no philosophy can lift,  
Shall vanish, if ye please,  
Like morning mist: and, where it lay,  
The spirits at your bidding play 30  
In gaiety and ease.

Star-guided contemplations move  
Through space, though calm, not raised above  
Prognostics that ye rule;  
The naked Indian of the wild,  
And haply, too, the cradled Child,  
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,  
Number their signs or instruments ?  
A rainbow, a sunbeam,  
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds, 40  
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,  
An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth  
With sighs of self-exhausted mirth  
Ye feelingly reprove;

And daily, in the conscious breast,  
Your visitations are a test  
And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless  
scope  
To an exulting Nation's hope, 50  
Oft, startled and made wise  
By your low-breathed interpretations,  
The simply-meek foretaste the springs  
Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war,  
Pervade the lonely ocean far  
As sail hath been unfurled;  
For dancers in the festive hall  
What ghastly partners hath your call 60  
Fetched from the shadowy world.

'T is said, that warnings ye dispense,  
Emboldened by a keener sense;  
That men have lived for whom,  
With dread precision, ye made clear  
The hour that in a distant year  
Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight ! Yet there are,  
Blest times when mystery is laid bare,  
Truth shows a glorious face,  
While on that isthmus which commands 70  
The councils of both worlds, she stands,  
Sage Spirits ! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent  
All changes of the element,  
Whose wisdom fixed the scale  
Of natures, for our wants provides  
By higher, sometimes humbler, guides, 30  
When lights of reason fail.

"IN THESE FAIR VALES HATH  
MANY A TREE"

1830. 1835

Engraven, during my absence in Italy, upon  
a brass plate inserted in the Stone.

In these fair vales hath many a Tree  
At Wordsworth's suit been spared;  
And from the builder's hand this Stone,  
For some rude beauty of its own,  
Was rescued by the Bard:  
So let it rest; and time will come  
When here the tender-hearted  
May heave a gentle sigh for him,  
As one of the departed.

## ELEGIAC MUSINGS .

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL,  
THE SEAT OF THE LATE SIR G. H.  
BEAUMONT, BART.

1830. 1835

These verses were in part composed on horse-back during a storm, while I was on my way from Coleorton to Cambridge: they are alluded to elsewhere.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church, wherein is a mural monument bearing an Inscription which, in deference to the earnest request of the deceased, is confined to name, dates, and these words:—"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord!"

WITH copious eulogy in prose or rhyme  
Graven on the tomb we struggle against  
Time,

Alas, how feebly! but our feelings rise  
And still we struggle when a good man  
dies:

Such offering BEAUMONT dreaded and forbade,

A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.  
Yet *here* at least — though few have numbered days

That shunned so modestly the light of  
praise —

His graceful manners, and the temperate ray  
Of that arch fancy which would round him  
play,

Brightening a converse never known to  
swerve

From courtesy and delicate reserve;  
That sense, the bland philosophy of life,  
Which checked discussion ere it warmed to  
strife —

Those rare accomplishments, and varied  
powers,

Might have their record among sylvan  
bowers.

Oh, fled for ever! vanished like a blast  
That shook the leaves in myriads as it  
passed; —

Gone from this world of earth, air, sea, and  
sky,

From all its spirit-moving imagery, 20  
Intensely studied with a painter's eye,  
A poet's heart; and, for congenial view,  
Portrayed with happiest pencil, not untrue  
To common recognitions while the line  
Flowed in a course of sympathy divine, —  
Oh! severed, too abruptly, from delights

That all the seasons shared with equal  
rights; —

Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,  
From soul-felt music, and the treasured  
page

Lit by that evening lamp which loved to  
shed

Its mellow lustre round thy honoured head; 30  
While Friends beheld thee give with eye,  
voice, mien,

More than theatric force to Shakspeare's  
scene; —

If thou hast heard me — if thy Spirit know  
Aught of these bowers and whence their  
pleasures flow;

If things in our remembrance held so dear,  
And thoughts and projects fondly cherished  
here,

To thy exalted nature only seem  
Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's  
dream —

Rebuke us not! — The mandate is obeyed  
That said, "Let praise be mute where I  
am laid;" 41

The holier deprecation, given in trust  
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;  
Yet have we found how slowly genuine  
grief

From *silent* admiration wins relief.  
Too long abashed, thy Name is like a rose  
That doth "within itself its sweetness  
close;"

A drooping daisy changed into a cup  
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.  
Within these groves, where still are flitting  
by 50

Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,  
Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,  
When towers and temples fall, to speak of  
Thee!

If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom  
Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb,  
Green ivy risen from out the cheerful earth,  
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs  
spring forth,

Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain  
unbound,

Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;  
While truth and love their purposes fulfil,  
Commemorating genius, talent, skill, 61  
That could not lie concealed where Thou  
wert known;

Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,  
The God upon whose mercy they are  
thrown.



"CHATSWORTH! THY STATELY  
MANSION, AND THE PRIDE"

1830. 1835

I have reason to remember the day that gave rise to this Sonnet, the 6th of November 1830. Having undertaken, a great feat for me, to ride my daughter's pony from Westmoreland to Cambridge, that she might have the use of it while on a visit to her uncle at Trinity Lodge, on my way from Bakewell to Matlock I turned aside to Chatsworth, and had scarcely gratified my curiosity by the sight of that celebrated place before there came on a severe storm of wind and rain which continued till I reached Derby, both man and pony in a pitiable plight. For myself, I went to bed at noon-day. In the course of that journey I had to encounter a storm, worse if possible, in which the pony could (or would) only make his way slantwise. I mention this merely to add that notwithstanding this battering I composed, on horseback, the lines to the memory of Sir George Beaumont, suggested during my recent visit to Coleorton.

CHATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and the  
pride

Of thy domain, strange contrast do present  
To house and home in many a craggy rent  
Of the wild Peak; where new-born waters  
glide

Through fields whose thrifty occupants  
abide

As in a dear and chosen banishment,  
With every semblance of entire content;  
So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!  
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave her  
troth

To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest  
farms,

May learn, if judgment strengthen with his  
growth,

That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath  
charms;

And, strenuous to protect from lawless  
harms

The extremes of favoured life, may honour  
both.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

1831. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on the right hand a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-

worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear, been washed away by the heavy rains.

A Rock there is whose homely front

The passing traveller slights;

Yet there the glow-worms hang their  
lamps,

Like stars, at various heights;

And one coy Primrose to that Rock

The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,

What kingdoms overthrown,

Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft

And marked it for my own;

A lasting link in Nature's chain

From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,

Their fellowship renew;

The stems are faithful to the root,

That worketh out of view;

And to the rock the root adheres

In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,

Though threatening still to fall;

The earth is constant to her sphere;

And God upholds them all:

So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads

Her annual funeral.

Here closed the meditative strain;

But air breathed soft that day,

The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,

The sunny vale looked gay;

And to the Primrose of the Rock

I gave this after-lay.

I sang — Let myriads of bright flowers,

Like Thee, in field and grove

Revive unenvied; — mightier far,

Than tremblings that reprove

Our vernal tendencies to hope,

Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed — for wan disease,

For sorrow that had bent

O'er hopeless dust, for withered age —

Their moral element,

And turned the thistles of a curse

To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,  
 The reasoning Sons of Men,  
 From one oblivious winter called  
 Shall rise, and breathe again;  
 And in eternal summer lose  
 Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends  
 This prescience from on high,  
 The faith that elevates the just,  
 Before and when they die;  
 And makes each soul a separate heaven,  
 A court for Deity.

50

## YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND  
 AND ON THE ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831

In the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott before his departure for Italy. This journey had been delayed by an inflammation in my eyes till we found that the time appointed for his leaving home would be too near for him to receive us without considerable inconvenience. Nevertheless we proceeded and reached Abbotsford on Monday. I was then scarcely able to lift up my eyes to the light. How sadly changed did I find him from the man I had seen so healthy, gay, and hopeful, a few years before, when he said at the inn at Paterdale, in my presence, his daughter Anne also being there, with Mr. Lockhart, my own wife and daughter, and Mr. Quillinan, — "I mean to live till I am *eighty*, and shall write as long as I live." But to return to Abbotsford, the inmates and guests we found there were Sir Walter, Major Scott, Anne Scott, and Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, Mr. Liddell, his Lady and Brother, and Mr. Allan the painter, and Mr. Laidlaw, a very old friend of Sir Walter's. One of Burns's sons, an officer in the Indian service, had left the house a day or two before, and had kindly expressed his regret that he could not await my arrival, a regret that I may truly say was mutual. In the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Liddell sang, and Mrs. Lockhart chanted old ballads to her harp; and Mr. Allan, hanging over the back of a chair, told and acted odd stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition and his daughter's singing, Sir Walter was much amused, as indeed were we all as far as circumstances would allow. But what is most worthy of mention is the admirable demeanour of Major Scott during the following evening, when the Liddells were gone and only ourselves and Mr. Allan were present. He had much to suffer from the sight of his father's infirmities and from the great change that was about to take place at the residence he had built, and where he had long lived in so much prosperity and happiness. But what struck me most was the patient kindness with which he supported himself under the many fretful expressions that his sister Anne addressed to him or uttered in his hearing. She, poor thing, as mistress of that house, had been subject, after her mother's death, to a heavier load of care and responsibility and greater sacrifices of time than one of such a constitution of body and mind was able to bear. Of this, Dora and I were made so sensible, that, as soon as we had crossed the Tweed on our departure, we gave vent at the same moment to our apprehensions that her brain would fail and she would go out of her mind, or that she would sink under the trials she had passed and those which awaited her. On Tuesday morning Sir Walter Scott accompanied us and most of the party to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. When we alighted from the carriages he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting those his favourite haunts. Of that excursion the verses "Yarrow revisited" are a memorial. Notwithstanding the romance that pervades Sir Walter's works and attaches to many of his habits, there is too much pressure of fact for these verses to harmonise as much as I could wish with other poems. On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of our carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream, that there flows somewhat rapidly; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eildon hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet beginning — "A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain." At noon on Thursday we left Abbotsford, and in the morning of that day Sir Walter and I had a serious conversation *à tête-à-tête*, when he spoke with gratitude of the happy life which upon the whole he had led. He had written in my daughter's Album, before he came into the breakfast-room that morning, a few stanzas addressed to her, and, while putting the book into her hand, in his own study, standing by his desk, he said to her in my presence — "I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake: they are probably the last verses I shall ever write." They show how much his mind was impaired, not by the strain of thought but by the execution, some of the lines being

imperfect, and one stanza wanting corresponding rhymes: one letter, the initial S, had been omitted in the spelling of his own name. In this interview also it was that, upon my expressing a hope of his health being benefited by the climate of the country to which he was going, and by the interest he would take in the classic remembrances of Italy, he made use of the quotation from "Yarrow unvisited" as recorded by me in the "Musings at Aquapendente" six years afterwards. Mr. Lockhart has mentioned in his Life of him what I heard from several quarters while abroad, both at Rome and elsewhere, that little seemed to interest him but what he could collect or heard of the fugitive Stuarts and their adherents who had followed them into exile. Both the "Yarrow revisited" and the "Sonnet" were sent him before his departure from England. Some further particulars of the conversations which occurred during this visit I should have set down had they not been already accurately recorded by Mr. Lockhart. I first became acquainted with this great and amiable man — Sir Walter Scott — in the year 1803, when my sister and I, making a tour in Scotland, were hospitably received by him in Lasswade upon the banks of the Esk, where he was then living. We saw a good deal of him in the course of the following week: the particulars are given in my sister's Journal of that tour.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP,

AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS,

THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1834

I  
1831. 1835

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title "Yarrow Revisited" will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream.

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,  
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"  
Was but an Infant in the lap  
When first I looked on Yarrow;  
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate  
Long left without a warder,  
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,  
Their dignity installing  
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
Were on the bough, or falling;  
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—  
The forest to embolden;  
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot  
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
In foamy agitation;

And slept in many a crystal pool  
For quiet contemplation:  
No public and no private care  
The freeborn mind entralling,  
We made a day of happy hours,  
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth,  
With freaks of graceful folly, —  
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
Her Night not melancholy;  
Past, present, future, all appeared  
In harmony united,  
Like guests that meet, and some from  
far,  
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
And down the meadow ranging,  
Did meet us with unaltered face,  
Though we were changed and changing;  
If, then, some natural shadows spread  
Our inward prospect over,  
The soul's deep valley was not slow  
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
And her divine employment!  
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
For hope and calm enjoyment;  
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,  
Has o'er their pillow brooded;

And Care waylays their steps — a Sprite  
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT ! compelled to change  
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot 50  
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot  
For mild Sorrento's breezy waves;  
May classic Fancy, linking  
With native Fancy her fresh aid,  
Preserve thy heart from sinking !

Oh ! while they minister to thee,  
Each vying with the other,  
May Health return to mellow Age  
With Strength, her venturous brother; 60  
And Tiber, and each brook and rill  
Renowned in song and story,  
With unimagined beauty shine,  
Nor lose one ray of glory !

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,  
By tales of love and sorrow,  
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
Wherever they invite Thee, 70  
At parent Nature's grateful call,  
With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
Such looks of love and honour  
As thy own Yarrow gave to me  
When first I gazed upon her;  
Beheld what I had feared to see,  
Unwilling to surrender  
Dreams treasured up from early days,  
The holy and the tender. 80

And what, for this frail world, were all  
That mortals do or suffer,  
Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
Memorial tribute offer ?  
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self ?  
Her features, could they win us,  
Unhelped by the poetic voice  
That hourly speaks within us ?

Nor deem that localised Romance  
Plays false with our affections; 90  
Unsanctifies our tears — made sport  
For fanciful dejections:  
Ah, no ! the visions of the past  
Sustain the heart in feeling  
Life as she is — our changeful Life,  
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day  
In Yarrow's groves were centred;  
Who through the silent portal arch  
Of mouldering Newark entered; 100  
And climb the winding stair that once  
Too timidly was mounted  
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last !)  
Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream !  
Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
Well pleased that future Bards should chant  
For simple hearts thy beauty;  
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
Dear to the common sunshine, 110  
And dearer still, as now I feel,  
To memory's shadowy moonshine !

# II

## ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM AB- BOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES

1831. 1835

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,  
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light  
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple  
height:  
Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain  
For kindred Power departing from their  
sight;  
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a  
blithe strain,  
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.  
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the  
might  
Of the whole world's good wishes with him  
goes;  
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue  
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror  
knows  
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true  
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,  
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !

# III

## A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

1831. 1835

Similar places for burial are not unfrequent  
in Scotland. The one that suggested this Son-  
net lies on the banks of a small stream called

the Wauchope that flows into the Esk near Langholme. Mickle, who, as it appears from his poem on Sir Martin, was not without genuine poetic feelings, was born and passed his boyhood in this neighbourhood, under his father, who was a minister of the Scotch Kirk. The Esk, both above and below Langholme, flows through a beautiful country, and the two streams of the Wauchope and the Ewes, which join it near that place, are such as a pastoral poet would delight in.

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged steep  
That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-yard lies;  
The hare's best couching-place for fearless sleep;  
Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous eyes,  
Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath ties,  
No vestige now remains; yet thither creep  
Bereft Ones, and in lowly anguish weep  
Their prayers out to the wind and naked skies.  
Proud tomb is none; but rudely-sculptured knights,  
By humble choice of plain old times, are seen  
Level with earth, among the hillocks green:  
Union not sad, when sunny daybreak smites  
The spangled turf, and neighbouring thickets ring  
With jubilate from the choirs of spring!

## IV

ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN  
THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

1831. 1835

The manses in Scotland and the gardens and grounds about them have seldom that attractive appearance which is common about our English parsonages, even when the clergyman's income falls below the average of the Scotch minister's. This is not merely owing to the one country being poor in comparison with the other, but arises rather out of the equality of their benefices, so that no one has enough to spare for decorations that might serve as an example for others; whereas, with us, the taste of the richer incumbent extends its influence more or less to the poorest. After all, in these observations the surface only of the matter is

touched. I once heard a conversation in which the Roman Catholic Religion was decried on account of its abuses. "You cannot deny, however," said a lady of the party, repeating an expression used by Charles II., "that it is the religion of a gentleman." It may be left to the Scotch themselves to determine how far this observation applies to their Kirk, while it cannot be denied, if it is wanting in that characteristic quality, the aspect of common life, so far as concerns its beauty, must suffer. Sincere christian piety may be thought not to stand in need of refinement or studied ornament; but assuredly it is ever ready to adopt them, when they fall within its notice, as means allow; and this observation applies not only to manners, but to everything a christian (truly so in spirit) cultivates and gathers round him, however humble his social condition.

SAY, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing hills --

Among the happiest-looking homes of men  
Scattered all Britain over, through deep glen,

On airy upland, and by forest rills,  
And o'er wide plains cheered by the lark that trills

His sky-born warblings — does aught meet your ken

More fit to animate the Poet's pen,  
Aught that more surely by its aspect fills  
Pure minds with sinless envy, than the Abode

Of the good Priest: who, faithful through all hours

To his high charge, and truly serving God,  
Has yet a heart and hand for trees and flowers,

Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod,  
Nor covets lineal rights in lands and towers.

## V

COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL  
DURING A STORM

1831. 1835

We were detained by incessant rain and storm at the small inn near Roslin Chapel, and I passed a great part of the day pacing to and fro in this beautiful structure, which, though not used for public service, is not allowed to go to ruin. Here this Sonnet was composed. If it has at all done justice to the feeling which the place and the storm raging without inspired, I was as a prisoner. A painter de-

lineating the interior of the chapel and its minute features under such circumstances would have, no doubt, found his time agreeably shortened. But the movements of the mind must be more free while dealing with words than with lines and colours; such at least was then and has been on many other occasions my belief, and, as it is allotted to few to follow both arts with success, I am grateful to my own calling for this and a thousand other recommendations which are denied to that of the painter.

THE wind is now thy organist; — a clank  
(We know not whence) ministers for a bell  
To mark some change of service. As the  
swell

Of music reached its height, and even when  
sank

The notes, in prelude, ROSLIN! to a blank  
Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous  
roof,

Pillars, and arches, — not in vain time-  
proof,

Though Christian rites be wanting! From  
what bank

Came those live herbs? by what hand were  
they sown

Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem  
unknown?

Yet in the Temple thy a friendly niche  
Share with their sculptured fellows, that,  
green-grown,

Copy their beauty more and more, and  
preach,

Though mute, of all things blending into  
one.

## VI

## THE TROSACHS

1831. 1835

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were coloured by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going.

THERE's not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
But were an apt confessional for One  
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
gone,  
That Life is but a tale of morning grass

Withered at eve. From scenes of art which  
chase

That thought away, turn, and with watchful  
eyes

Feed it mid Nature's old felicities,

Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear  
than glass

Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice  
happy quest,

If from a golden perch of aspen spray

(October's workmanship to rival May)

The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast

That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught  
lay,

Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

## VII

1831. 1835

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or  
mute;

The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy

Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy;

The target mouldering like ungathered  
fruit;

The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit,

As eagerly pursued; the umbrella spread

To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's  
head

All speak of manners withering to the  
root,

And of old honours, too, and passions high:

Then may we ask, though pleased that  
thought should range

Among the conquests of civility,

Survives imagination — to the change

Superior? Help to virtue does she give?

If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

## VIII

COMPOSED AFTER READING A  
NEWSPAPER OF THE DAY

1831. 1835

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link  
by link;

Soon shall the Rich be levelled down — the  
Poor

Meet them half way." Vain boast! for  
These, the more

They thus would rise, must low and lower  
sink

Till, by repentance stung, they fear to think;  
 While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant few  
 Bent in quick turns each other to undo,  
 And mix the poison, they themselves must drink.  
 Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to cry,  
 "Knowledge will save me from the threatened woe."  
 For, if than other rash ones more thou know,  
 Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly  
 Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,  
 Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty

## IX

COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF  
LOCH ETIVE

1831. 1835

"That make the Patriot-spirit" It was mortifying to have frequent occasions to observe the bitter hatred of the lower orders of the Highlanders to their superiors; love of country seemed to have passed into its opposite. Emigration was the only relief looked to with hope.

"THIS Land of Rainbows spanning glens  
 whose walls,  
 Rock-built, are hung with rainbow-coloured mists —  
 Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood never rests —  
 Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls —  
 Of Mountains varying momentarily their crests —  
 Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts are halls  
 Where Fancy entertains becoming guests;  
 While native song the heroic Past recalls."

Thus, in the net of her own wishes caught,  
 The Muse exclaimed; but Story now must hide

Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course of pride

Has been diverted, other lessons taught,  
 That make the Patriot-spirit bow her head  
 Where the all-conquering Roman feared to tread.

## X

## EAGLES

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIE CASTLE IN THE  
BAY OF OBAN

1831. 1835

"The last I saw was on the wing," off the promontory of Fairhead, county of Antrim. I mention this because, though my tour in Ireland with Mr. Marshall and his son was made many years ago, this allusion to the eagle is the only image supplied by it to the poetry I have since written. We travelled through that country in October, and to the shortness of the days and the speed with which we travelled (in a carriage and four) may be ascribed this want of notices, in my verse, of a country so interesting. The deficiency I am somewhat ashamed of, and it is the more remarkable as contrasted with my Scotch and Continental tours, of which are to be found in this volume so many memorials.

DISHONOUR'D Rock and Ruin! that, by law

Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarr'd  
 Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.  
 Vex'd is he, and screams loud. The last

I saw  
 Was on the wing; stooping, he struck with awe

Man, bird, and beast; then, with a consort pair'd,  
 From a bold headland, their loved aery's guard,

Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw  
 Light from the fountain of the setting sun.  
 Such was this Prisoner once; and, when his plumes

The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,

Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes  
 His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,

His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

## XI

## IN THE SOUND OF MULL

1831. 1835

Touring late in the season in Scotland is an uncertain speculation. We were detained a week by rain at Bunaw on Loch Etive in a vain

hope that the weather would clear up and allow me to show my daughter the beauties of Glencoe. Two days we were at the isle of Mull, on a visit to Major Campbell ; but it rained incessantly, and we were obliged to give up our intention of going to Staffa. The rain pursued us to Tyndrum, where the Twelfth Sonnet was composed in a storm.

TRADITION, be thou mute ! Oblivion, throw  
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung  
Round strath and mountain, stamped by  
the ancient tongue

On rock and ruin darkening as we go, —  
Spots where a word, ghostlike, survives to  
show

What crimes from hate, or desperate love,  
have sprung;

From honour misconceived, or fancied  
wrong,

What feuds, not quenched but fed by mutual  
woe.

Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, un-  
tamed

By civil arts and labours of the pen,  
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce  
Men,

Who, to spread wide the reverence they  
claimed

For patriarchal occupations, named  
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of Etive  
Glen?"

## XII

SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN  
A STORM

1831. 1835

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian crook,  
And all that Greece and Italy have sung  
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among !  
*Ours* couch on naked rocks, — will cross a  
brook

Sworn with chill rains, nor ever cast a look  
This way or that, or give it even a thought  
More than by smoothest pathway may be  
brought

Into a vacant mind. Can written book  
Teach what *they* learn ? Up, hardy Moun-  
taineer !

And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One  
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art,  
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see and  
hear

To what dread Powers He delegates his part  
On earth, who works in the heaven of  
heavens, alone.

## XIII

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S  
RUINED MANSION AND FAM-  
ILY BURIAL-PLACE, NEAR KIL-  
LIN

1831. 1835

WELL sang the Bard who called the grave,  
in strains

Thoughtful and sad, the "narrow house."  
No style

Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile  
Grief of her sting; nor cheat, where he  
detains

The sleeping dust, stern Death. How  
reconcile

With truth, or with each other, decked re-  
mains

Of a once warm Abode, and that *new* Pile,  
For the departed, built with curious pains  
And mausolean pomp ? Yet here they stand  
Together, — 'mid trim walks and artful  
bowers,

To be looked down upon by ancient hills,  
That, for the living and the dead, demand  
And prompt a harmony of genuine powers;  
Concord that elevates the mind, and stills.

## XIV

## "REST AND BE THANKFUL!"

AT THE HEAD OF GLENCROE

1831. 1835

DOUBLING and doubling with laborious walk,  
Who, that has gained at length the wished-  
for Height,

This brief, this simple wayside Call can slight,  
And rests not thankful ? Whether cheered  
by talk

With some loved friend, or by the unseen  
hawk

Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams  
that shine,

At the sun's outbreak, as with light divine,  
Ere they descend to nourish root and stalk  
Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs  
repose,

Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep



Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air,  
 And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's  
 sweep, —  
 So may the Soul, through powers that  
 Faith bestows,  
 Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss  
 that Angels share.

## XV

## HIGHLAND HUT

1831. 1835

SEE what gay wild flowers deck this earth-  
 built Cot,  
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and  
 how it may,  
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray  
 Like wreaths of vapour without stain or blot.  
 The limpid mountain rill avoids it not;  
 And why shouldst thou? — If rightly trained  
 and bred,  
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot  
 Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to  
 tread.  
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery  
 roof,  
 Undressed the pathway leading to the door;  
 But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor;  
 Search, for their worth, some gentle heart  
 wrong-proof,  
 Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials  
 fewer,  
 Belike less happy. — Stand no more aloof !

## XVI

## THE BROWNIE

1831. 1835

Upon a small island, not far from the head  
 of Loch Lomond, are some remains of an an-  
 cient building, which was for several years the  
 abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last  
 survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once power-  
 ful in that neighbourhood. Passing along the  
 shore opposite this island in the year 1814,  
 the Author learned these particulars, and that  
 this person then living there had acquired the  
 appellation of "The Brownie." See "The  
 Brownie's Cell," p. 529, to which the following  
 is a sequel.

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt  
 and toad;  
 Ask of his fellow-men, and they will tell

How he was found, cold as an icicle,  
 Under an arch of that forlorn abode;  
 Where he, unpropped, and by the gathering  
 flood  
 Of years hemmed round, had dwelt, pre-  
 pared to try  
 Privation's worst extremities, and die  
 With no one near save the omnipresent God.  
 Verily so to live was an awful choice —  
 A choice that wears the aspect of a doom;  
 But in the mould of mercy all is cast  
 For Souls familiar with the eternal Voice;  
 And this forgotten Taper to the last  
 Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful  
 gloom.

## XVII

TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN  
EVENING STAR

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND

1831. 1835

THOUGH joy attend Thee orient at the birth  
 Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most  
 To watch thy course when Day-light, fled  
 from earth,  
 In the grey sky hath left his lingering Ghost,  
 Perplexed as if between a splendour lost  
 And splendour slowly mustering. Since  
 the Sun,  
 The absolute, the world-absorbing One,  
 Relinquished half his empire to the host  
 Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,  
 Holy as princely — who that looks on thee,  
 Touching, as now, in thy humility  
 The mountain borders of this seat of care,  
 Can question that thy countenance is bright,  
 Celestial Power, as much with love as  
 light?

## XVIII

## BOTHWELL CASTLE

PASSED UNSEEN, ON ACCOUNT OF  
STORMY WEATHER

1831. 1835

In my Sister's Journal is an account of Both-  
 well Castle as it appeared to us at that time.  
 IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times the  
 Brave  
 (So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn

The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.  
Once on those steeps I roamed at large,  
and have

In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;  
The river glides, the woods before me wave;  
Then why repine that now in vain I crave  
Needless renewal of an old delight?  
Better to thank a dear and long-past day  
For joy its sunny hours were free to give  
Than blame the present, that our wish hath  
crost.

Memory, like sleep, hath powers which  
dreams obey,

Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive:  
How little that she cherishes is lost!

## XIX

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE  
LIONS' DEN, AT HAMILTON  
PALACE

1831. 1835

AMID a fertile region green with wood  
And fresh with rivers, well did it become  
The ducal Owner, in his palace-home  
To naturalise this tawny Lion brood;  
Children of Art, that claim strange brother-  
hood

(Couched in their den) with those that  
roam at large

Over the burning wilderness, and charge  
The wind with terror while they roar for  
food.

Satiate are *these*; and stilled to eye and ear;  
Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring  
fear!

Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the cave  
Daunt him — if his Companions, now be-  
drowsed,

Outstretched and listless, were by hunger  
roused:

Man placed him here, and God, he knows,  
can save.

## XX

THE AVON

A FEEDER OF THE ANNAN

1831. 1835

"Yet is it one that other rivulets bear."  
There is the Shakspeare Avon, the Bristol  
Avon; the one that flows by Salisbury, and a

small river in Wales, I believe, bear the name;  
Avon being in the ancient tongue the general  
name for river.

AVON — a precious, an immortal name!

Yet is it one that other rivulets bear

Like this unheard-of, and their channels  
wear

Like this contented, though unknown to  
Fame:

For great and sacred is the modest claim  
Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er they  
flow;

And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they  
go,

Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding with-  
out blame.

But Praise can waste her voice on work of  
tears,

Anguish, and death: full oft where innocent  
blood

Has mixed its current with the limpid  
flood,

Her heaven-offending trophies Glory rears:  
Never for like distinction may the good

Shrink from *thy* name, pure Rill, with un-  
pleased cars.

## XXI

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM  
AN EMINENCE IN INGLEWOOD  
FOREST

1831. 1835

The extensive forest of Inglewood has been  
enclosed within my memory. I was well ac-  
quainted with it in its ancient state. The  
Hart's-horn tree mentioned in the next Sonnet  
was one of its remarkable objects, as well as  
another tree that grew upon an eminence not  
far from Penrith. it was single and conspicuous;  
and being of a round shape, though it was un-  
iversally known to be a Sycamore, it was always  
called the "*Round Thorn*," so difficult is it to  
chain fancy down to fact.

THE forest huge of ancient Caledon  
Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,  
That swept from hill to hill, from flood to  
flood:

On her last thorn the nightly moon has  
shone;

Yet still, though inappropriate Wild be  
none,

Fair parks spread wide where Adam Bell  
 might deign  
 With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive  
 again,  
 To kill for merry feast their venison.  
 Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade  
 His church with monumental wreck be-  
 strown;  
 The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost un-  
 laid,  
 Hath still his castle, though a skeleton,  
 That he may watch by night, and lessons con-  
 Of power that perishes, and rights that  
 fade.

## XXII

HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PEN-  
RITH

1831. 1835

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne  
 affixed  
 To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle art,  
 Among its withering topmost branches  
 mixed,  
 The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,  
 Whom the Dog Hercules pursued — his  
 part  
 Each desperately sustaining, till at last  
 Both sank and died, the life-veins of the  
 chased  
 And chaser bursting here with one dire  
 smart.  
 Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!  
 High was the trophy hung with pitiless  
 pride;  
 Say, rather, with that generous sympathy  
 That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a  
 seat;  
 And, for this feeling's sake, let no one  
 chide  
 Verse that would guard thy memory,  
 HART'S-HORN TREE!

## XXIII

## FANCY AND TRADITION

1831. 1835

THE Lovers took within this ancient grove  
 Their last embrace; beside those crystal  
 springs  
 The Hermit saw the Angel spread his  
 wings

For instant flight; the Sage in yon alcove  
 Sate musing; on that hill the Bard would  
 rove,

Not mute, where now the linnet only sings:  
 Thus everywhere to truth Tradition clings,  
 Or Fancy localises Powers we love.  
 Were only History licensed to take note  
 Of things gone by, her meagre monu-  
 ments

Would ill suffice for persons and events:  
 There is an ampler page for man to quote,  
 A readier book of manifold contents,  
 Studied alike in palace and in cot.

## XXIV

## COUNTESS'S PILLAR

1831. 1835

Suggested by the recollection of Julian's  
 Bowor and other traditions connected with this  
 ancient forest.

On the roadside between Penrith and  
 Appleby, there stands a pillar with the follow-  
 ing inscription:—

"This Pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by  
 Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c., for  
 a memorial of her last parting with her pious  
 mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cum-  
 berland, on the 2d of April, 1616; in memory  
 whereof she hath left an annuity of 4*l* to be dis-  
 tributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham,  
 every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone  
 table placed hard by. Laus Deo!"

WHILE the Poor gather round, till the end  
 of time

May this bright flower of Charity display  
 Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day;  
 Flower than the loveliest of the vernal  
 prime

Lovelier — transplanted from heaven's  
 purest clime!

"Charity never faileth:" on that creed,  
 More than on written testament or deed,  
 The pious Lady built with hope sublime.  
 Aims on this stone to be dealt out, *for ever!*  
 "LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing by  
 Has with that Parting mixed a filial sigh,  
 Blest its humane Memorial's fond en-  
 deavour;

And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-  
 glazed,  
 Has ended, though no Clerk, with "God  
 be praised!"

## XXV

## ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

FROM THE ROMAN STATION AT OLD  
PENRITH

1831. 1835

How profitless the relics that we cull,  
 Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,  
 Unless they chasten fancies that presume  
 Too high, or idle agitations lull!

Of the world's flatteries if the brain be  
 full,

To have no seat for thought were better  
 doom,

Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull  
 Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.  
 Heaven out of view, our wishes what are  
 they?

Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp?  
 The Sage's theory? the Poet's lay?

Mere Fibulæ without a robe to clasp;  
 Obsolete lamps, whose light no time re-  
 calls;

Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals!

## XXVI

APOLOGY FOR THE FOREGOING  
POEMS

1831. 1835

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt,  
 Abrupt — as without preconceived design  
 Was the beginning; yet the several Lays  
 Have moved in order, to each other bound  
 By a continuous and acknowledged tie  
 Though unapparent — like those Shapes  
 distinct

That yet survive ensculptured on the  
 walls

Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck  
 Of famed Persepolis; each following each,  
 As might besem a stately embassy,<sup>10</sup>  
 In set array; these bearing in their hands  
 Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,  
 Or gift to be presented at the throne  
 Of the Great King; and others, as they go  
 In priestly vest, with holy offerings charged,  
 Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.

Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred  
 Power,

The Spirit of humanity, disdain  
 A ministration humble but sincere,<sup>11</sup>

That from a threshold loved by every Muse  
 Its impulse took — that sorrow-stricken  
 door,

Whence, as a current from its fountain-  
 head,

Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings  
 flowed,

Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength  
 From kindred sources; while around us  
 sighed

(Life's three first seasons having passed  
 away)

Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost  
 sprinklings fell

(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland  
 heights;

And every day brought with it tidings new  
 Of rash change, ominous for the public  
 weal.

Hence, if dejection has too oft eneroached<sup>30</sup>  
 Upon that sweet and tender melancholy

Which may itself be cherished and caressed  
 More than enough; a fault so natural

(Even with the young, the hopeful, or the  
 gay)

For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

## XXVII

## THE HIGHLAND BROACH

1831. 1835

On ascending a hill that leads from Loch Awe  
 towards Inverary, I fell into conversation with a  
 woman of the humbler class who wore one of  
 those Highland Broaches. I talked with her  
 about it; and upon parting with her, when I  
 said with a kindness I truly felt — "May that  
 Broach continue in your family through many  
 generations to come, as you have already pos-  
 sessed it" — she thanked me most becomingly,  
 and seemed not a little moved.

The exact resemblance which the old Broach  
 (still in use, though rarely met with, among the  
 Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula must  
 strike every one, and concurs, with the plaid  
 and kilt, to recall to mind the communication  
 which the ancient Romans had with this remote  
 country.

If to Tradition faith be due,  
 And echoes from old verse speak true,  
 Ere the meek Saint, Columba, bore  
 Glad tidings to Iona's shore,  
 No common light of nature blessed  
 The mountain region of the west,

A land where gentle manners ruled  
 O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,  
 That raised, for centuries, a bar  
 Impervious to the tide of war: 10  
 Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain  
 Where haughty Force had striven in vain;  
 And, 'mid the works of skilful hands,  
 By wanderers brought from foreign lands  
 And various climes, was not unknown  
 The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown;  
 The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,  
 Still in the Highland Brooch is seen,  
 The silver Brooch of massy frame,  
 Worn at the breast of some grave Dame 20  
 On road or path, or at the door  
 Of fern-thatched hut on heathy moor:  
 But delicate of yore its mould,  
 And the material finest gold;  
 As might beseem the fairest Fair,  
 Whether she graced a royal chair,  
 Or shed, within a vaulted hall,  
 No fancied lustre on the wall  
 Where shields of mighty heroes hung,  
 While Fingal heard what Ossian sung. 30  
 The heroic Age expired — it slept  
 Deep in its tomb: — the bramble crept  
 O'er Fingal's hearth; the grassy sod  
 Grew on the floors his sons had trod:  
 Malvina! where art thou? Their state  
 The noblest-born must abdicate;  
 The fairest, while with fire and sword  
 Come Spoilers — horde impelling horde,  
 Must walk the sorrowing mountains, drest  
 By ruder hands in homelier vest. 40  
 Yet still the female bosom lent,  
 And loved to borrow, ornament;  
 Still was its inner world a place  
 Reached by the dews of heavenly grace;  
 Still pity to this last retreat  
 Clove fondly; to his favourite seat  
 Love wound his way by soft approach,  
 Beneath a massier Highland Brooch.

When alternations came of rage  
 Yet fiercer, in a darker age; 50  
 And feuds, where, clan encountering clan,  
 The weaker perished to a man;  
 For maid and mother, when despair  
 Might else have triumphed, baffling prayer,  
 One small possession lacked not power,  
 Provided in a calmer hour,  
 To meet such need as might befall —  
 Roof, raiment, bread, or burial:  
 For woman, even of tears bereft,  
 The hidden silver Brooch was left. 60  
 As generations come and go  
 Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow;  
 Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers away,  
 And feeble, of themselves, decay;  
 What poor abodes the heir-loom hide,  
 In which the castle once took pride!  
 Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,  
 If saved at all, are saved by stealth.  
 Lo! ships, from seas by nature barred,  
 Mount along ways by man prepared; 70  
 And in far-stretching vales, whose streams  
 Seek other seas, their canvas gleams.  
 Lo! busy towns spring up, on coasts  
 Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts;  
 Soon, like a lingering star forlorn  
 Among the novelties of morn,  
 While young delights on old encroach,  
 Will vanish the last Highland Brooch.  
 But when, from out their viewless bed,  
 Like vapours, years have rolled and spread;  
 And this poor verse, and worthier lays, 80  
 Shall yield no light of love or praise;  
 Then, by the spade, or cleaving plough,  
 Or torrent from the mountain's brow,  
 Or whirlwind, reckless what his might  
 Entombs, or forces into light;  
 Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,  
 That oft befriends Antiquity,  
 And clears Oblivion from reproach,  
 May render back the Highland Brooch. 90

## DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS

1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount.

"Not to the earth confined,  
 Ascend to heaven."

WHERE will they stop, those breathing  
 Powers,  
 The Spirits of the new-born flowers?

They wander with the breeze, they wind  
 Where'er the streams a passage find;  
 Up from their native ground they rise  
 In mute aerial harmonies;  
 From humble violet — modest thyme —  
 Exhaled, the essential odours climb,  
 As if no space below the sky  
 Their subtle flight could satisfy: 10  
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride  
 If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-show-  
ers,  
The spirit-quickener of the flowers,  
That with moist virtue softly cleaves  
The buds, and freshens the young leaves,  
The birds pour forth their souls in notes  
Of rapture from a thousand throats —  
Here checked by too impetuous haste,  
While there the music runs to waste, 20  
With bounty more and more enlarged,  
Till the whole air is overcharged;  
Give ear, O Man! to their appeal  
And thirst for no inferior zeal,  
Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth; aspire! aspire!  
So pleads the town's cathedral quire,  
In strains that from their solemn height  
Sink, to attain a loftier flight;  
While incense from the altar breathes 30  
Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths;  
Or, flung from swinging censers, shrouds  
The taper-lights, and curls in clouds  
Around angelic Forms, the still  
Creation of the painter's skill,  
That on the service wait concealed  
One moment, and the next revealed.  
— Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,  
And for no transient ecstasies!  
What else can mean the visual plea 40  
Of still or moving imagery —  
The iterated summons loud,  
Not wasted on the attendant crowd,  
Nor wholly lost upon the throng  
Hurrying the busy streets along?  
Alas! the sanctities combined  
By art to unsensualise the mind,  
Decay and languish; or, as creeds  
And humours change, are spurned like  
weeds:

The priests are from their altars thrust; 50  
Temples are levelled with the dust;  
And solemn rites and awful forms  
Founder amid fanatic storms.  
Yet evermore, through years renewed  
In undisturbed vicissitude  
Of seasons balancing their flight  
On the swift wings of day and night,  
Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door  
Wide open for the scattered Poor.  
Where flower-breathed incense to the skies  
Is wafted in mute harmonies; 60  
And ground fresh-cloven by the plough  
Is fragrant with a humbler vow;  
Where birds and brooks from leafy dells  
Chime forth unwearied canticles,

And vapours magnify and spread  
The glory of the sun's bright head —  
Still constant in her worship, still  
Conforming to the eternal Will,  
Whether men sow or reap the fields, 70  
Divine monition Nature yields,  
That not by bread alone we live,  
Or what a hand of flesh can give;  
That every day should leave some part  
Free for a sabbath of the heart:  
So shall the seventh be truly blest,  
From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

"CALM IS THE FRAGRANT AIR"

1832. 1835

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to  
lose  
Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with fall-  
ing dews.  
Look for the stars, you'll say that there are  
none;  
Look up a second time, and, one by one,  
You mark them twinkling out with silvery  
light,  
And wonder how they could elude the  
sight!  
The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,  
Warbled a while with faint and fainter  
powers,  
But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers:  
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron  
tone 10  
The time's and season's influence disown;  
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound  
In drowsy sequence — how unlike the sound  
That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear  
On fireside listeners, doubting what they  
hear!  
The shepherd, bent on rising with the  
sun,  
Had closed his door before the day was  
done,  
And now with thankful heart to bed doth  
creep,  
And joins his little children in their sleep.  
The bat, lured forth where trees the lane  
o'ershade, 20  
Flits and reflits along the close arcade;  
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth  
With burring note, which Industry and  
Sloth  
Might both be pleased with, for it suits  
them both.

A stream is heard — I see it not, but know  
 By its soft music whence the waters flow:  
 Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no  
 more;  
 One boat there was, but it will touch the  
 shore  
 With the next dipping of its slackened oar;  
 Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the  
 gay,  
 Might give to serious thought a moment's<sup>30</sup>  
 sway,  
 As a last token of man's toilsome day !

TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING  
 HIS PICTURE OF NAPOLEON  
 BUONAPARTE ON THE ISLAND  
 OF ST. HELENA

1832 (?). 1832

This Sonnet, though said to be written on seeing the Portrait of Napoleon, was, in fact, composed some time after, extempore, in the wood at Rydal Mount.

HAYDON ! let worthier judges praise the  
 skill  
 Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines  
 And charm of colours; *I* applaud those  
 signs  
 Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;  
 That unencumbered whole of blank and still  
 Sky without cloud — ocean without a wave;  
 And the one Man that laboured to enslave  
 The World, sole-standing high on the bare  
 hill —  
 Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent  
 face  
 Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary place,  
 With light reflected from the invisible sun  
 Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye  
 Like them. The ungulity Power pursues  
 his way,  
 And before *him* doth dawn perpetual run.

RURAL ILLUSIONS

1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. Observed a hundred times in the grounds there.

SYLPH was it ? or a Bird more bright  
 Than those of fabulous stock ?  
 A second darted by; — and lo !  
 Another of the flock,

Through sunshine flitting from the bough  
 To nestle in the rock.  
 Transient deception ! a gay freak  
 Of April's mimeries !  
 Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy  
 Among the budding trees,<sup>10</sup>  
 Proved last year's leaves, pushed from the  
 spray  
 To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora ! show thy face,  
 And let thy hand be seen,  
 Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers,  
 That, as they touch the green,  
 Take root (so seems it) and look up  
 In honour of their Queen.  
 Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,  
 That not in vain aspired<sup>20</sup>  
 To be confounded with live growths,  
 Most dainty, most admired,  
 Were only blossoms dropt from twigs  
 Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the World's illusive shows;  
 Her wingless flutterings,  
 Her blossoms which, though shed, outbrave  
 The floweret as it springs,  
 For the undecieved, smile as they may,  
 Are melancholy things:<sup>30</sup>  
 But gentle Nature plays her part  
 With ever-varying wiles,  
 And transient feignings with plain truth  
 So well she reconciles,  
 That those fond Idlers most are pleased  
 Whom oftenest she beguiles.

LOVING AND LIKING

IRREGULAR VERSES

ADDRESSED TO A CHILD

(BY MY SISTER)

1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. It arose, I believe, out of a casual expression of one of Mr Swinburne's children.

THERE 's more in words than I can teach:  
 Yet listen, Child ! — I would not preach;  
 But only give some plain directions  
 To guide your speech and your affections.  
 Say not you *love* a roasted fowl,  
 But you may love a screaming owl.

And, if you can, the unwieldy toad  
That crawls from his secure abode  
Within the mossy garden wall  
When evening dews begin to fall. 10  
Oh mark the beauty of his eye:  
What wonders in that circle lie!  
So clear, so bright, our fathers said  
He wears a jewel in his head!  
And when, upon some showery day,  
Into a path or public way  
A frog leaps out from bordering grass,  
Startling the timid as they pass,  
Do you observe him, and endeavour 20  
To take the intruder into favour;  
Learning from him to find a reason  
For a light heart in a dull season.  
And you may love him in the pool,  
That is for him a happy school,  
In which he swims as taught by nature,  
Fit pattern for a human creature,  
Glancing amid the water bright,  
And sending upward sparkling light.  
Nor blush if o'er your heart be stealing  
A love for things that have no feeling: 30  
The spring's first rose by you espied,  
May fill your breast with joyful pride;  
And you may love the strawberry-flower,  
And love the strawberry in its bower;  
But when the fruit, so often praised  
For beauty, to your lip is raised,  
Say not you *love* the delicate treat,  
But *like* it, enjoy it, and thankfully eat.  
Long may you love your pensioner mouse,  
Though one of a tribe that torment the  
house: 40  
Nor dislike for her cruel sport the cat,  
Deadly foe both of mouse and rat;  
Remember she follows the law of her kind,  
And Instinct is neither wayward nor blind.  
Then think of her beautiful gliding form,  
Her tread that would scarcely crush a  
worm,  
And her soothing song by the winter fire,  
Soft as the dying throb of the lyre.  
I would not circumscribe your love:  
It may soar with the eagle and brood with  
the dove, 50  
May pierce the earth with the patient  
mole,  
Or track the hedgehog to his hole.  
Loving and liking are the solace of life,  
Rock the cradle of joy, smooth the death-  
bed of strife.  
You love your father and your mother,  
Your grown-up and your baby brother;

You love your sister, and your friends,  
And countless blessings which God sends:  
And while these right affections play,  
You *live* each moment of your day; 60  
They lead you on to full content,  
And likings fresh and innocent,  
That store the mind, the memory feed,  
And prompt to many a gentle deed:  
But *likings* come, and pass away;  
'Tis *love* that remains till our latest day:  
Our heavenward guide is holy love,  
And will be our bliss with saints above.

# UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST

MARCH 1832

1832. 1832

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;  
And in the Senate some there were who  
doffed  
The last of their humanity, and scoffed  
At providential judgments, undismayed  
By their own daring. But the People  
prayed  
As with one voice; their flinty heart grew  
soft  
With penitential sorrow, and aloft  
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us  
aid!"  
Oh that with aspirations more intense,  
Chastised by self-abasement more pro-  
found,  
This People, once so happy, so renowned  
For liberty, would seek from God defence  
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence  
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

# FILIAL PIETY

ON THE WAYSIDE BETWEEN PRESTON  
AND LIVERPOOL

1832(?). 1832

This was communicated to me by a coach-  
man at whose side I sat while he was driving.  
In the course of my many coach rambles and  
journeys, which, during the daytime always  
and often in the night, were taken on the out-  
side of the coach, I had good and frequent op-  
portunities of learning the characteristics of  
this class of men. One remark I made that is  
worth recording; that whenever I had occasion  
especially to notice their well-ordered, respect-



ful, and kind behaviour to women, of whatever age, I found them, I may say almost always, to be married men.

UNTOUCHED through all severity of cold;  
Inviolatè, whate'er the cottage hearth  
Might need for comfort, or for festal mirth;  
That Pile of Turf is half a century old:  
Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been told  
Since suddenly the dart of death went forth  
'Gainst him who raised it, — his last work  
on earth:

Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a hold

Upon his Father's memory, that his hands,  
Through reverence, touch it only to repair  
Its waste. — Though crumbling with each  
breath of air,

In annual renovation thus it stands —  
Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle there,  
And red-breasts warble when sweet sounds  
are rare.

#### "IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY LIGHT FROM HEAVEN"

1832. 1836

These verses were written some time after we had become residents at Rydal Mount, and I will take occasion from them to observe upon the beauty of that situation, as being backed and flanked by lofty fells, which bring the heavenly bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the mountain-tops, while the prospect in front lies open to a length of level valley, the extended lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills; so that it gives an opportunity to the inhabitants of the place of noticing the stars in both the positions here alluded to, namely, on the tops of the mountains, and as winter-lamps at a distance among the leafless trees

If thou indeed derive thy light from  
Heaven,

Then, to the measure of that heaven-born  
light,

Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content: —  
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
And they that from the zenith dart their  
beams,

(Visible though they be to half the earth,  
Though half a sphere be conscious of their  
brightness)

Are yet of no diviner origin,  
No purer essence, than the one that burns,

Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge  
Of some dark mountain; or than those  
which seem

Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter  
lamps,

Among the branches of the leafless trees.  
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:  
Then, to the measure of the light vouch-  
safed,

Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.

#### TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT

Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill,  
Esq. for St. John's College, Cambridge.

1832. 1835

The six last lines of this Sonnet are not  
written for poetical effect, but as a matter of  
fact, which, in more than one instance, could  
not escape my notice in the servants of the  
house.

Go, faithful Portrait! and where long hath  
knelt

Margaret, the Saintly Foundress, take thy  
place;

And, if Time spare the colours for the grace  
Which to the work surpassing skill hath  
dealt,

Thou, on thy rock reclined, though king-  
doms melt

And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem  
To breathe in rural peace, to hear the  
stream,

And think and feel as once the Poet felt.  
Whate'er thy fate, those features have not  
grown

Unrecognised through many a household  
fear

More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops  
of dew

By morning shed around a flower half-  
blown;

Tears of delight, that testified how true  
To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how  
dear!

#### A WREN'S NEST

1833. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. This nest was  
built, as described, in a tree that grows near  
the pool in Dora's field next the Rydal Mount  
garden.

AMONG the dwellings framed by birds  
 In field or forest with nice care,  
 Is none that with the little Wren's  
 In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires,  
 And seldom needs a laboured roof:  
 Yet is it to the fiercest sun  
 Impervious, and storm-proof.

So warm, so beautiful withal,  
 In perfect fitness for its aim,  
 That to the Kind by special grace  
 Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek  
 An opportune recess,  
 The hermit has no finer eye  
 For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,  
 A canopy in some still nook;  
 Others are pent-housed by a brae  
 That overhangs a brook.

There to the brooding bird her mate  
 Warbles by fits his low clear song;  
 And by the busy streamlet both  
 Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build,  
 Where, till the flitting bird's return,  
 Her eggs within the nest repose,  
 Like relics in an urn.

But still, where general choice is good,  
 There is a better and a best;  
 And, among fairest objects, some  
 Are fairer than the rest;

This, one of those small builders proved  
 In a green covert, where, from out  
 The forehead of a pollard oak,  
 The leafy antlers sprout;

For She who planned the mossy lodge,  
 Mistrusting her evasive skill.  
 Had to a Primrose looked for aid  
 Her wishes to fulfil.

High on the trunk's projecting brow,  
 And fixed an infant's span above  
 The budding flowers, peeped forth the  
 nest  
 The prettiest of the grove!

The treasure proudly did I show  
 To some whose minds without disdain  
 Can turn to little things; but once  
 Looked up for it in vain:

'Tis gone — a ruthless spoiler's prey,  
 Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,  
 'Tis gone! (so seemed it) and we grieved  
 Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by  
 In clearer light the moss-built cell  
 I saw, espied its shaded mouth;  
 And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread  
 The largest of her upright leaves;  
 And thus, for purposes benign,  
 A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb  
 Thy quiet with no ill intent,  
 Secure from evil eyes and hands  
 On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird! and when thy young  
 Take flight, and thou art free to roam,  
 When withered is the guardian Flower,  
 And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,  
 Amid the unviolated grove,  
 Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft  
 In foresight, or in love.

## TO —

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN  
 CHILD, MARCH 1833

1833. 1835

Written at Moresby near Whitehaven, when  
 I was on a visit to my son, then Incumbent of  
 that small living. While I am dictating these  
 notes to my friend, Miss Fenwick January 24,  
 1843, the child upon whose birth these verses  
 were written is under my roof, and is of a dispo-  
 sition so promising that the wishes and prayers  
 and prophecies which I then breathed forth in  
 verse are, through God's mercy, likely to be  
 realised.

"Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis  
 Navita, nudus humi jacet, etc." — LUCRETIVS.

LIKE a shipwrecked Sailor tost  
By rough waves on a perilous coast,  
Lies the Babe, in helplessness  
And in tenderest nakedness,  
Flung by labouring nature forth  
Upon the mercies of the earth.  
Can its eyes beseech ? — no more  
Than the hands are free to implore:  
Voice but serves for one brief cry;  
Plaint was it ? or prophecy  
Of sorrow that will surely come ?  
Omen of man's grievous doom !

But, O Mother ! by the close  
Duly granted to thy throes;  
By the silent thanks, now tending  
Incense-like to Heaven, descending  
Now to mingle and to move  
With the gush of earthly love,  
As a debt to that frail Creature,  
Instrument of struggling Nature  
For the blissful calm, the peace  
Known but to this *one* release —  
Can the pitying spirit doubt  
That for human-kind springs out  
From the penalty a sense  
Of more than mortal recompense ?

As a floating summer cloud,  
Though of gorgeous drapery proud,  
To the sun-burnt traveller,  
Or the stooping labourer,  
Of times makes its bounty known  
By its shadow round him thrown;  
So, by chequerings of sad cheer,  
Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,  
Of their presence tell — too bright  
Haply for corporeal sight !  
Ministers of grace divine  
Feelingly their brows incline  
O'er this seeming Castaway  
Breathing, in the light of day,  
Something like the faintest breath  
That has power to baffle death —  
Beautiful, while very weakness  
Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother ! under warrant  
Of the universal Parent,  
Who repays in season due  
Them who have, like thee, been true  
To the filial chain let down  
From his everlasting throne,  
Angels hovering round thy couch,  
With their softest whispers vouch,  
That — whatever griefs may fret,  
Cares entangle, sins beset,  
This thy First-born, and with tears

Stain her cheek in future years —  
Heavenly succour, not denied  
To the babe, whate'er betide,  
Will to the woman be supplied !

Mother ! blest be thy calm case;

60

Blest the starry promises, —  
And the firmament benign  
Hallowed be it, where they shine !  
Yes, for them whose souls have scope

10

Ample for a winged hope,  
And can earthward bend an ear  
For needful listening, pledge is here,  
That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread  
In thy footsteps, and be led  
By that other Guide, whose light

70

Of manly virtues, mildly bright,  
Gave him first the wished-for part  
In thy gentle virgin heart;  
Then, amid the storms of life  
Presignified by that dread strife  
Whence ye have escaped together,

50

She may look for serene weather;  
In all trials sure to find  
Comfort for a faithful mind;  
Kindlier issues, holier rest,  
Than even now await her prest,  
Conscious Nursling, to thy breast !

80

## THE WARNING

A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

1833. 1835

These lines were composed during the fever  
spread through the Nation by the Reform Bill.  
As the motives which led to this measure, and  
the good or evil which has attended or has risen  
from it, will be duly appreciated by future  
historians, there is no call for dwelling on the  
subject in this place. I will content myself  
with saying that the then condition of the  
people's mind is not, in these verses, exaggerated.

10

LIST, the winds of March are blowing;  
Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of showing

Their meek heads to the nipping air,  
Which ye feel not, happy pair !  
Sunk into a kindly sleep.

50

We, meanwhile, our hope will keep;  
And if Time leagued with adverse Change  
(Too busy fear !) shall cross its range,  
Whatsoever check they bring,

Anxious duty hindering, 10  
To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds  
Upon the events of home as life proceeds,  
Affections pure and holy in their source  
Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier course;  
Hopes that within the Father's heart pre-  
vail,

Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow to  
fail;

And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it  
rings

To his grave touch with no unready strings,  
While thoughts press on, and feelings over-  
flow, 20

And quick words round him fall like flakes  
of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet maintain  
their sway,

And have renewed the tributary Lay.

Truths of the heart flock in with eager  
pace,

And FANCY greets them with a fond em-  
brace;

Swift as the rising sun his beams extends  
She shoots the tidings forth to distant  
friends;

Their gifts she hails (deemed precious, as  
they prove

For the unconscious Babe so prompt a  
love !).

But from this peaceful centre of delight 30  
Vague sympathies have urged her to take  
flight:

Rapt into upper regions, like the bee  
That sucks from mountain heath her honey  
fee;

Or, like the warbling lark intent to shroud  
His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,  
She soars — and here and there her pinions  
rest

On proud towers, like this humble cottage,  
blest

With a new visitant, an infant guest —  
Towers where red streamers flout the breezy  
sky

In pomp foreseen by her creative eye, 40  
When feasts shall crowd the hall, and  
steeple bells

Glad proclamation make, and heights and  
dells

Catch the blithe music as it sinks and  
swells,

And harboured ships, whose pride is on the  
sea,

Shall hoist their topmost flags in sign of  
glee,

Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning ills  
assigned

By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind  
The track that was, and is, and must be,  
worn 49

With weary feet by all of woman born) —  
Shall *now* by such a gift with joy be moved,

Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved ?  
Not He, whose last faint memory will

command

The truth that Britain was his native land;  
Whose infant soul was tutored to confide

In the cleansed faith for which her martyrs  
died;

Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown  
With rapture thrilled; whose Youth re-  
vered the crown

Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,  
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor ! 60

— Not He, who from her mellowed practice  
drew

His social sense of just, and fair, and true;  
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France  
Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,  
Foundations broken up, the deeps run wild,  
Nor grieved to see (himself not unbe-  
guiled) —

Woke from the dream, the dreamer to up-  
braid,

And learn how sanguine expectations fade  
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed, ---  
To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain 70  
From further havoc, but repent in vain, —  
Good aims lie down, and perish in the road  
Where guilt had urged them on with cease-  
less goad,

Proofs thickening round her that on public  
ends

Domestic virtue vitally depends,  
That civic strife can turn the happiest  
hearth

Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting  
earth.

Can such a One, dear Babe ! though  
glad and proud 78

To welcome thee, repel the fears that crowd  
Into his English breast, and spare to quake  
Less for his own than for thy innocent sake ?  
Too late — or, should the providence of  
God

Lead, through dark ways by sin and sorrow  
trod,

Justice and peace to a secure abode,  
Too soon — thou com'st into this breathing  
world;

Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.  
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering  
Realm?

What hand suffice to govern the state-helm?  
If, in the aims of men, the surest test  
Of good or bad (whate'er be sought for or  
profest)

Lie in the means required, or ways ord-  
ained,

For compassing the end, else never gained;  
Yet governors and governed both are blind  
To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;  
If to expedience principle must bow;  
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the in-  
cumbent Now;

If cowardly concession still must feed  
The thirst for power in men who ne'er con-  
cede;

Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way  
For domination at some riper day;  
If generous Loyalty must stand in awe  
Of subtle Treason, in his mask of law,  
Or with bravado insolent and hard,  
Provoking punishment, to win reward;  
If office help the factious to conspire,  
And they who *should* extinguish, fan the  
fire —

Then, will the sceptre be a straw, the crown  
Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down;  
To be blown off at will, by Power that  
spares it

In cunning patience, from the head that  
wears it.

Lost people, trained to theoretic feud!  
Lost above all, ye labouring multitude!  
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous  
tongues

Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs;  
And over fancied usurpations brood,  
Oft snapping at revenge in sullen mood;  
Or, from long stress of real injuries, fly  
To desperation for a remedy;

In bursts of outrage spread your judgments  
wide,

And to your wrath cry out, "Be thou our  
guide;"

Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread  
earth's floor

In marshalled thousands, darkening street  
and moor

With the worst shape mock-patience ever  
wore;

Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem  
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream  
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage be-  
hest

Justice shall rule, disorder be suppress,  
And every man sit down as Plenty's Guest!  
— Oh for a bridle bitted with remorse  
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong  
course!

Oh may the Almighty scatter with his grace  
These mists, and lead you to a safer place,  
By paths no human wisdom can foretrace!  
May He pour round you, from worlds far  
above

Man's feverish passions, his pure light of  
love,

That quietly restores the natural mien  
To hope, and makes truth willing to be seen!  
Else shall your blood-stained hands in  
frenzy reap

Fields gaily sown when promises were  
cheap. —

Why is the Past belied with wicked art,  
The Future made to play so false a part,  
Among a people famed for strength of  
mind,

Foremost in freedom, noblest of mankind?  
We act as if we joyed in the sad tune  
Storms make in rising, valued in the moon  
Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrate-  
ful Nation!

If thou persist, and scorn moderation,  
Spread for thyself the snares of tribulation,  
Whom, then, shall meekness guard? What  
saving skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing  
still?

— Soon shall the widow (for the speed of  
Time

Nought equals when the hours are winged  
with crime)

Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous knee,  
From him who judged her lord, a like  
decree;

The skies will weep o'er old men desolate:  
Ye little-ones! Earth shudders at your  
fate,

Outcasts and homeless orphans —

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleeping  
pair

Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care!  
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts  
lie still;

Seek for the good and cherish it — the ill  
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

"IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF  
JOY AND PAIN"

1833. 1835

If this great world of joy and pain  
Revolve in one sure track;  
If freedom, set, will rise again,  
And virtue, flown, come back;  
Woe to the purblind crew who fill  
The heart with each day's care;  
Nor gain, from past or future, skill  
To bear, and to forbear!

ON A HIGH PART OF THE  
COAST OF CUMBERLAND

Easter Sunday, April 7

THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY

1833. 1835

The lines were composed on the road between Moresby and Whitehaven while I was on a visit to my son, then rector of the former place. This and some other Voluntaries originated in the concluding lines of the last paragraph of this poem. With this coast I have been familiar from my earliest childhood, and remember being struck for the first time by the town and port of Whitehaven, and the white waves breaking against its quays and piers, as the whole came into view from the top of the high ground down which the road (it has since been altered) then descended abruptly. My sister, when she first heard the voice of the sea from this point, and beheld the scene spread before her, burst into tears. Our family then lived at Cockermouth, and this fact was often mentioned among us as indicating the sensibility for which she was so remarkable.

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,  
Flung back from distant clines a streaming  
fire,  
Whose blaze is now subdued to tender  
gleams,  
Prelude of night's approach with soothing  
dreams.  
Look round; — of all the clouds not one is  
moving;  
'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling,  
loving.  
Silent, and steadfast as the vaulted sky,  
The boundless plain of waters seems to  
lie: —  
Comes that low sound from breezes rustling  
o'er

The grass-crowned headland that conceals  
the shore?

No; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty sea,  
Whispering how meek and gentle he *can* be!

Thou Power supreme! who, arming to  
rebuke

Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,  
And clothe thyself with terrors like the  
flood

Of ocean roused into its fiercest mood,  
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain  
For the brief course that must for me re-  
main;

Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice  
In admonitions of thy softest voice!

Whate'er the path these mortal feet may  
trace,

Breathe through my soul the blessing of  
thy grace,

Glad, through a perfect love, a faith sincere  
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with  
fear,

Glad to expand; and, for a season, free  
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee!

(BY THE SEASIDE)

1833. 1835

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to  
rest,

And the wild storm hath somewhere found  
a nest;

Air slumbers — wave with wave no longer  
strives,

Only a heaving of the deep survives,  
A tell-tale motion! soon will it be laid,  
And by the tide alone the water swayed.

Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings mild  
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled —  
Such is the prospect far as sight can range,  
The soothing recompence, the welcome  
change.

Where, now, the ships that drove before  
the blast,

Threatened by angry breakers as they  
passed;

And by a train of flying clouds bemoaned;  
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked

As on a bed of death? Some lodge in  
peace,

Saved by His care who bade the tempest  
cease;

And some, too heedless of past danger,  
court

Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port.  
But near, or hanging sea and sky between,  
Not one of all those winged powers is seen,  
Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet  
heard;

Yet oh ! how gladly would the air be stirred  
By some acknowledgment of thanks and  
praise,

Soft in its temper as those vesper lays  
Sung to the Virgin while accordant oars  
Urge the slow bark along Calabrian shores;  
A sea-born service through the mountains  
felt

Till into one loved vision all things melt:

Or like those hymns that soothe with graver  
sound

The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound; <sup>30</sup>  
And, from the wide and open Baltic, rise  
With punctual care, Lutheran harmonies.

Hush, not a voice is here ! but why repine,  
Now when the star of eve comes forth to  
shine

On British waters with that look benign ?  
Ye mariners, that plough your onward way,  
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,  
May silent thanks at least to God be given  
With a full heart; "our thoughts are *heard*  
in heaven."

## POEMS

### COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR IN THE SUMMER OF 1833

My companions were H C Robinson and my son John.

Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Gail-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfriesshire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.

#### I

1833. 1835

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels ! that have grown  
And spread as if ye knew that days might  
come

When ye would shelter in a happy home,  
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,  
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown  
To sue the God; but, haunting your green  
shade

All seasons through, is humbly pleased to  
braid

Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship,  
self-sown.

Farewell ! no Minstrels now with harp new-  
strung

For summer wandering quit their house-  
hold bowers;

Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue  
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours  
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,  
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

#### II

1833. 1835

WHY should the Enthusiast, journeying  
through this Isle

Repine as if his hour were come too late ?

Not unprotected in her mouldering state,

Antiquity salutes him with a smile,

'Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund  
toil,

And pleasure-grounds where Taste, refined  
Co-mate

Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,

Far as she may, primeval Nature's style.

Fair land ! by Time's parental love made  
free,

By Social Order's watchful arms em-  
braced;

With unexampled union meet in thee,

For eye and mind, the present and the  
past;

With golden prospect for futurity,

If that be revered which ought to last.

## III

1833. 1835

THEY called Thee MERRY ENGLAND, in  
old time;

A happy people won for thee that name  
With envy heard in many a distant clime;  
And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st  
the same

Endearing title, a responsive chime  
To the heart's fond belief; though some  
there are

Whose sterner judgments deem that word  
a snare

For inattentive Fancy, like the lime  
Which foolish birds are caught with. Can,  
I ask,

This face of rural beauty be a mask  
For discontent, and poverty, and crime;  
These spreading towns a cloak for lawless  
will?

Forbid it, Heaven! — and MERRY ENG-  
LAND still

Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and  
rhyme!

## IV

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR  
KESWICK

1833. 1835

GRETA, what fearful listening! when huge  
stones

Rumble along thy bed, block after block:

Or, whirling with reiterated shock,

Combat, while darkness aggravates the  
groans:

But if thou (like Coeytus from the moans  
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert  
named

The Mourner, thy true nature was de-  
famed,

And the habitual murmur that atones

For thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as  
Spring

Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand  
thrones

Seats of glad instinct and love's carolling,  
The concert, for the happy, then may vie

With liveliest peals of birth-day har-  
mony:

To a grieved heart, the notes are beni-

## V

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF  
COCKERMOUTH

1833. 1835

Where the Author was born, and his Father's  
remains are laid.

A POINT of life between my Parent's dust,  
And yours, my buried Little-ones! am I;  
And to those graves looking habitually  
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.

Death to the innocent is more than just,

And, to the sinner, mercifully bent;

So may I hope, if truly I repent

And meekly bear the ills which bear I  
must:

And You, my Offspring! that do still re-  
main,

Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,  
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual  
pain

We breathed together for a moment's space,  
The wrong, by love provoked, let love  
arraign,

And only love keep in your hearts a place.

## VI

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT  
OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE

1833. 1835

"THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly  
think,

Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,

We, differing once so much, are now Com-  
peers,

Prepared, when each has stood his time, to  
sink

Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link

United us; when thou, in boyish play,

Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey  
To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink

Of light was there; — and thus did I, thy  
Tutor,

Make thy young thoughts acquainted with  
the grave;

While thou wert chasing the winged but-  
terfly

Through my green courts; or climbing, a  
bold suitor,

Up to the flowers whose golden progeny

Still round my shattered brow in beauty



## VII

## NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM

1833. 1835

So named from the religious House which stood close by. I have rather an odd anecdote to relate of the Nun's Well. One day the landlady of a public-house, a field's length from the well, on the road side, said to me — "You have been to see the Nun's Well, Sir?" — "The Nun's Well! what is that?" said the Postman, who in his royal livery stooped his mail-car at the door. The landlady and I explained to him what the name meant, and what sort of people the nuns were. A countryman who was standing by, rather tipsy, stammered out — "Aye, those nuns were good people; they are gone, but we shall soon have them back again." The Reform mania was just then at its height.

THE cattle crowding round this beverage  
clear

To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs  
have trod

The encircling turf into a barren clod;  
Through which the waters creep, then disappear,

Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near;  
Yet, o'er the brink, and round the lime-  
stone cell

Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's  
Well,"

Name that first struck by chance my startled  
ear)

A tender Spirit broods — the pensive Shade  
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid  
By hooded Votareesses with saintly cheer;  
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild  
Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled  
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

## VIII

## TO A FRIEND

ON THE BANKS OF THE DERWENT

1833. 1835

My son John, who was then building a parsonage on his small living at Brigham.

PASTOR and Patriot! — at whose bidding  
rise

These modest walls, amid a flock that need,  
For one who comes to watch them and to  
feed,

A fixed Abode — keep down presageful  
sighs.

Threats, which the unthinking only can de-  
spise,

Perplex the Church; but be thou firm, —  
be true

To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,  
Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice

Dost Thou prepare, whose sign will be the  
smoke

Of thy new hearth; and sooner shall its  
wreaths,

Mounting while earth her morning incense  
breathes,

From wandering fiends of air receive a  
yoke,

And straightway cease to aspire, than God  
disdain

This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

## IX

## MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DER-  
WENT, WORKINGTON

1833. 1835

I will mention for the sake of the friend who is writing down these notes, that it was among the fine Scotch firs near Ambleside, and particularly those near Green Bank, that I have over and over again paused at the sight of this image. Long may they stand to afford a like gratification to others! — This wish is not uncalled for, several of their brethren having already disappeared.

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces  
vowed,

The Queen drew back the wimple that she  
wore;

And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian  
shore

Her landing hailed, how touchingly she  
bowed!

And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud  
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth  
darts,

When a soft summer gale at evening parts  
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)

She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian  
seer,

Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the  
strand,

With step prelude to a long array  
Of woes and degradations hand in hand --  
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear  
Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fother-  
ingay !

## X

STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A  
STEAMBOAT OFF SAINT BEES'  
HEADS, ON THE COAST OF  
CUMBERLAND

1833. 1835

If Life were slumber on a bed of down,  
Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,  
Sad were our lot: no hunter of the hare  
Exults like him whose javelin from the lair  
Has roused the lion; no one plucks the rose,  
Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter  
blows

'Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,  
With joy like his who climbs, on hands and  
knees,  
For some rare plant, yon Headland of St.  
Bees.

This independence upon oar and sail,      10  
This new indifference to breeze or gale,  
This straight-lined progress, furrowing a  
flat sea,  
And regular as if locked in certainty --  
Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the  
storm !

That Courage may find something to per-  
form;

That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to  
freeze

At Danger's bidding, may confront the  
seas,

Firm as the towering Headlands of St.  
Bees.

Dread cliff of Baruth ! *that* wild wish may  
sleep,

Bold as if men and creatures of the Deep  
Breathed the same element; too many  
wrecks      21

Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly  
decks

Hast thou looked down upon, that such a  
thought

Should here be welcome, and in verse en-  
wrought:

With thy stern aspect better far agrees  
Utterance of thanks that we have past with  
ease,  
As millions thus shall do, the Headlands of  
St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her  
store,

What boots the gain if Nature should lose  
more ?

And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian  
place      30

In man's intelligence sublimed by grace ?  
When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian  
coast,

Tempestuous winds her holy errand crossed:  
She knelt in prayer -- the waves their wrath  
appease;

And, from her vow well weighed in Hea-  
ven's decrees,

Rose, where she touched the strand, the  
Chantry of St. Bees.

"Cruel of heart were they, bloody of  
hand,"

Who in these Wilds then struggled for  
command;

The strong were merciless, without hope  
the weak;

Till this bright Stranger came, fair as day-  
break,      40

And as a cresset true that darts its length  
Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength;  
Guiding the mariner through troubled  
seas,

And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,  
Like the fixed Light that crowns yon Head-  
land of St. Bees.

To aid the Votress, miracles believed  
Wrought in men's minds, like miracles  
achieved;

So piety took root; and Song might tell  
What humanizing virtues near her cell  
Sprang up, and spread their fragrance wide  
around;      50

How savage bosoms melted at the sound  
Of gospel-truth enchained in harmonies  
Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through  
close trees,

From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument of  
love,

Was glorified, and took its place, above

The silent stars, among the angelic quire,  
Her chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,  
And perished utterly; but her good  
deeds

Had sown the spot, that witnessed them,  
with seeds 60

Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze  
With quickening impulse answered their  
mute pleas,

And lo! a *statelier* pile, the Abbey of St.  
Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry  
fed;

And Charity extendeth to the dead  
Her intercessions made for the soul's rest  
Of tardy penitents; or for the best  
Among the good (when love might else have  
slept,

Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.  
Thanks to the austere and simple Devo-  
tees, 70

Who, to that service bound by venial  
fees,

Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.

Are not, in sooth, their Requiem's sacred  
ties

Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,  
Subdued, composed, and formalized by  
art,

To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart?

The prayer for them whose hour is past  
away

Says to the Living, profit while ye may!

A little part, and that the worst, he sees  
Who thinks that priestly cunning holds the  
keys 80

That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.

Conscience, the timid being's inmost light,  
Hope of the dawn and solace of the  
night,

Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray  
In many an hour when judgment goes  
astray.

Ah! scorn not hastily their rule who try  
Earth to despise, and flesh to mortify;  
Consume with zeal, in wingèd ecstasies  
Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,  
Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees. 90

Yet none so prompt to succour and pro-  
tect

The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked

On the bare coast; nor do they grudge the  
boon

Which staff and cockle hat and sandal  
shoon

Claim for the pilgrim: and, though chid-  
ings sharp

May sometimes greet the strolling min-  
strel's harp,

It is not then when, swept with sportive  
ease,

It charms a feast-day throng of all de-  
grees,

Brightening the archway of revered St.  
Bees.

How did the cliffs and echoing hills re-  
joice 100

What time the Benedictine Brethren's  
voice,

Imploring, or commanding with meet pride,  
Summoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds  
aside,

And under one blest ensign serve the  
Lord

In Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword!  
Flaming till thou from Pannyn hands re-  
lease

That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities  
Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.

But look we now to them whose minds  
from far

Follow the fortunes which they may not  
share. 110

While in Judea Fancy loves to roam,

She helps to make a Holy-land at home:

The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere in-  
vites

To sound the crystal depth of maiden  
rights;

And wedded Life, through scriptural mys-  
teries,

Heavenward ascends with all her chari-  
ties,

Taught by the hooded Celibates of St.  
Bees.

Nor be it e'er forgotten how, by skill

Of cloistered Architects, free their souls to  
fill

With love of God, throughout the Land  
were raised 120

Churches, on whose symbolic beauty gazed  
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious  
awe;

As at this day men seeing what they saw,  
Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,  
Aspire to more than earthly destinies;  
Witness yon Pile that greets us from St. Bees.

Yet more; around those Churches, gathered  
Towns

Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty  
frowns;

Peaceful abodes, where Justice might up-  
hold

Her scales with even hand, and culture  
mould 130

The heart to pity, train the mind in care  
For rules of life, sound as the Time could  
bear.

Nor dost thou fail, thro' abject love of  
ease,

Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,  
To bear thy part in this good work, St.  
Bees.

Who with the ploughshare clove the barren  
moors,

And to green meadows changed the swampy  
shores?

Thinned the rank woods; and for the cheer-  
ful grange

Made room, where wolf and boar were used  
to range?

Who taught, and showed by deeds, that  
gentler chains 140

Should bind the vassal to his lord's do-  
mains? —

The thoughtful Monks, intent their God to  
please,

For Christ's dear sake, by human sympa-  
thies

Poured from the bosom of thy Church, St.  
Bees!

But all availed not; by a mandate given  
Through lawless will the Brotherhood was  
driven

Forth from their cells; their ancient House  
laid low

In Reformation's sweeping overthrow.  
But now once more the local Heart re-  
vives,

The inextinguishable Spirit strives. 150

Oh may that Power who hushed the stormy  
seas,

And cleared a way for the first Votaries,  
Prosper the new-born College of St. Bees!

Alas! the Genius of our age, from Schools  
Less humble, draws her lessons, aims, and  
rules.

To Prowess guided by her insight keen  
Matter and Spirit are as one Machine;  
Boastful Idolatress of formal skill  
She in her own would merge the eternal  
will:

Better, if Reason's triumphs match with  
these, 160

Her flight before the bold credulities  
That furthered the first teaching of St.  
Bees.

## XI

### IN THE CHANNEL BETWEEN THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

RANGING the heights of Seawfell or Black-  
comb,

In his lone course the Shepherd oft will  
pause,

And strive to fathom the mysterious laws  
By which the clouds, arrayed in light or  
gloom,

On Mona settle, and the shapes assume  
Of all her peaks and ridges. What he  
draws

From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the  
cause,

He will take with him to the silent tomb.  
Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,

Haply the untaught Philosopher may speak  
Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory

That satisfies the simple and the meek,  
Blest in their pious ignorance, though  
weak

To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

## XII

### AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith  
was strong

And doubts and scruples seldom teased the  
brain,

That no adventurer's bark had power to gain  
These shores if he approached them bent  
on wrong;

For, suddenly up-conjured from the Main,  
 Mists rose to hide the Land — that search,  
     though long  
 And eager, might be still pursued in vain.  
 O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song!  
 That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,  
 As men believed, the waters were impelled,  
 The air controlled, the stars their courses  
     held;  
 But element and orb on *acts* did wait  
 Of *Powers* endued with visible form, in-  
     stinct  
 With will, and to their work by passion  
     linked.

## XIII

1833. 1835

DESIRE we past illusions to recall?  
 To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide  
 Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn  
     aside?  
 No, — let this Age, high as she may, instal  
 In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's  
     fall,  
 The universe is infinitely wide;  
 And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,  
 Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new  
     wall  
 Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,  
 Imaginative Faith! canst overleap,  
 In progress toward the fount of Love, —  
     the throne  
 Of Power whose ministers the records keep  
 Of periods fixed, and laws established, less  
 Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

## XIV

ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY,  
 ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

“Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori”

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Coborn,  
 Even when they rose to check or to repel  
 Tides of aggressive war, oft served as  
     well  
 Greedy ambition, armed to treat with  
     scorn  
 Just limits; but yon Tower, whose smiles  
     adorn  
 This perilous bay, stands clear of all offence;

Blest work it is of love and innocence,  
 A Tower of refuge built for the else forlorn.  
 Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,  
 Struggling for life, into its saving arms!  
 Spare, too, the human helpers! Do they  
     stir  
 'Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to  
     die?  
 No; their dread service nerves the heart it  
     warms,  
 And they are led by noble HILARY.

## XV

BY THE SEASHORE, ISLE OF  
 MAN

1833. 1835

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling  
     Brine,  
 With wonder smit by its transparency,  
 And all-enraptured with its purity? —  
 Because the unstained, the clear, the crys-  
     talline,  
 Have ever in them something of benign;  
 Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,  
 A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye  
 Of a young maiden, only not divine.  
 Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm  
 For beverage drawn as from a mountain-  
     well;  
 Temptation centres in the liquid Calm;  
 Our daily raiment seems no obstacle  
 To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea!  
 And revelling in long embrace with thee.

## XVI

ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

My son William is here the person alluded  
 to as saving the life of the youth, and the cir-  
 cumstances were as mentioned in the Sonnet.

A YOUTH too certain of his power to wade  
 On the smooth bottom of this clear bright  
     sea,  
 To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee  
 Leapt from this rock, and but for timely aid  
 He, by the alluring element betrayed,  
 Had perished. Then might Sea-nymphs  
     (and with sighs

Of self-reproach) have chanted elegies  
 Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid  
 In peaceful earth: for, doubtless, he was  
     frank,  
 Utterly in himself devoid of guile;  
 Knew not the double-dealing of a smile;  
 Nor aught that makes men's promises a  
     blank,  
 Or deadly snare: and He survives to bless  
 The Power that saved him in his strange  
     distress.

XVII  
 ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

DID pangs of grief for lenient time too  
     keen,  
 Grief that devouring waves had caused, or  
     guilt  
 Which they had witnessed — sway the man  
     who built  
 This Homestead, placed where nothing  
     could be seen,  
 Nought heard, of ocean troubled or serene?  
 A tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,  
 That o'er the channel holds august com-  
     mand,  
 The dwelling raised, — a veteran Marine.  
 He, in disgust, turned from the neighbour-  
     ing sea  
 To shun the memory of a listless life  
 That hung between two callings. May no  
     strife  
 More hurtful here beset him, doomed  
     though free,  
 Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye  
 Shrink from the daily sight of earth and  
     sky!

XVIII  
 BY A RETIRED MARINER. H. H.

Mrs. Wordsworth's Brother Henry

1833. 1835

FROM early youth I ploughed the restless  
     Main,  
 My mind as restless and as apt to change;  
 Through every clime and ocean did I range,  
 In hope at length a competence to gain;  
 For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still  
     remain.

Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,  
 And hardships manifold did I endure,  
 For Fortune on me never deigned to smile;  
 Yet I at last a resting-place have found,  
 With just enough life's comforts to procure,  
 In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,  
 A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts  
     abound;  
 Then sure I have no reason to complain,  
 Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I  
     still remain.

XIX  
 AT BALA-SALA. ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

Supposed to be written by a friend (Mr.  
 Cookson) who died there a few years after.  
 BROKEN in fortune, but in mind entire  
 And sound in principle, I seek repose  
 Where ancient trees this convent-pile en-  
     close,  
 In ruin beautiful. When vain desire  
 Intrudes on peace, I pray the eternal Sire  
 To cast a soul-subduing shade on me,  
 A grey-haired, pensive, thankful Refugee;  
 A shade — but with some sparks of hea-  
     venly fire  
 Once to these cells vouchsafed. And when  
     I note  
 The old Tower's brow yellowed as with the  
     beams  
 Of sunset ever there, albeit streams  
 Of stormy weather-stains that semblance  
     wrought,  
 I thank the silent Monitor, and say  
 "Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours of  
     the day!"

XX  
 TYNWALD HILL

1833. 1835

Mr. Robinson and I walked the greater part  
 of the way from Castle-town to Piel, and  
 stopped some time at Tynwald Hill. One of  
 my companions was an elderly man, who in a  
 muddy way (for he was tipsy) explained and  
 answered, as far as he could, my enquiries  
 about this place and the ceremonies held here.  
 I found more agreeable company in some little  
 children; one of whom, upon my request, re-

cited the Lord's Prayer to me, and I helped her to a clearer understanding of it as well as I could; but I was not at all satisfied with my own part; hers was much better done, and I am persuaded that, like other children, she knew more about it than she was able to express, especially to a stranger.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal mound

(Still marked with green turf circles narrowing

Stage above stage) would sit this Island's King,

The laws to promulgate, enrobed and crowned:

While, compassing the little mount around, Degrees and Orders stood, each under each: Now, like to things within fate's easiest reach

The power is merged, the pomp a grave has found.

Off with yon cloud, old Snafell! that thine eye

Over three Realms may take its widest range;

And let, for them, thy fountains utter strange Voices, thy winds break forth in prophecy, If the whole State must suffer mortal change Like Mona's miniature of sovereignty.

### XXI

1833. 1835

DESPOND who will — I heard a voice exclaim,

"Though fierce the assault, and shattered the defence,

It cannot be that Britain's social frame, The glorious work of time and providence, Before a flying season's rash pretence, Should fall; that She, whose virtue put to shame,

When Europe prostrate lay, the Conqueror's aim,

Should perish, self-subverted. Black and dense

The cloud is; but brings *that* a day of doom. To Liberty? Her sun is up the while, That orb whose beams round Saxon Alfred shone:

Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye Streams, sweep on,

Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest Isle Toss in the fanning wind a humbler plume."

### XXII

#### IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG

DURING AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, JULY 17

1833. 1835

The morning of the eclipse was exquisitely beautiful while we passed the Crag as described in the Sonnet. On the deck of the steamboat were several persons of the poor and labouring class, and I could not but be struck by their cheerful talk with each other, while not one of them seemed to notice the magnificent objects with which we were surrounded; and even the phenomenon of the eclipse attracted but little of their attention. Was it right not to regret this? They appeared to me, however, so much alive in their own minds to their own concerns that I could not look upon it as a misfortune that they had little perception for such pleasures as cannot be cultivated without ease and leisure. Yet if one surveys life in all its duties and relations, such ease and leisure will not be found so enviable a privilege as it may at first appear. Natural Philosophy, Painting, and Poetry, and refined taste, are no doubt great acquisitions to society; but among those who dedicate themselves to such pursuits it is to be feared that few are as happy, and as consistent in the management of their lives, as the class of persons who at that time led me into this course of reflection. I do not mean by this to be understood to derogate from intellectual pursuits, for that would be monstrous: I say it in deep gratitude for this compensation to those whose cares are limited to the necessities of daily life. Among them, self-tormentors, so numerous in the higher classes of society, are rare.

SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,  
Appeared the crag of Ailsa, ne'er did morn  
With gleaming lights more gracefully adorn  
His sides, or wreath with mist his forehead  
high:

Now, faintly darkening with the sun's  
eclipse,

Still is he seen, in lone sublimity,  
Towering above the sea and little ships;  
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing by,  
Each for her haven; with her freight of  
Care,

Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom  
looks

Into the secret of to-morrow's fare;  
Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth  
of books,

Or aught that watchful Love to Nature owes  
For her mute Powers, fixed Forms, or  
transient Shows.

XXIII  
ON THE FRITH OF CLYDE  
IN A STEAMBOAT

1833. 1835

The mountain outline on the north of this island, as seen from the Frith of Clyde, is much the finest I have ever noticed in Scotland or elsewhere.

ARRAN ! a single-crested Teneriffe,  
A St. Helena next — in shape and hue,  
Varying her crowded peaks and ridges blue;  
Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff  
Built for the air, or winged Hippogriff ?  
That he might fly, where no one could  
pursue,

From this dull Monster and her sooty crew;  
And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff.  
Impotent wish ! which reason would despise  
If the mind knew no union of extremes,  
No natural bond between the boldest  
schemes,

Ambition frames, and heart-humilities.  
Beneath stern mountains many a soft vale  
lies,

And lofty springs give birth to lowly  
streams.

XXIV  
ON REVISITING DUNOLLY  
CASTLE

1833. 1835

See former series, "Yarrow Revisited," etc.,  
p. 685.

THE captive Bird was gone; — to cliff or  
moor

Perchance had flown, delivered by the  
storm;

Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the  
worm:

Him would we not: but, climbing a tall  
tower,

There saw, impaved with rude fidelity  
Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,

An Eagle with stretched wings, but beam-  
less eye —

An Eagle that could neither wail nor soar.  
Effigy of the Vanished — (shall I dare  
To call thee so ?) or symbol of fierce deeds  
And of the towering courage which past  
times

Rejoiced in — take, whate'er thou be, a share,  
Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes  
That animate my way where'er it leads !

XXV  
THE DUNOLLY EAGLE

1833. 1835

NOT to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew;  
But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred,  
Came and delivered him, alone he sped  
Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.  
Now, near his master's house in open view  
He dwells, and hears indignant tempests  
howl,

Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic  
fowl,

Beware of him ! Thou, saucy cockatoo,  
Look to thy plumage and thy life ! — The  
roc,

Fleet as the west wind, is for *him* no quarry;  
Balanced in ether he will never tarry,  
Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor Bird !  
even so

Doth man of brother man a creature make  
That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

XXVI  
WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF  
MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN

1824. 1827

The verses —

"Or strayed  
From hope and promise, self-betrayed,"

were, I am sorry to say, suggested from apprehensions of the fate of my friend, H. C., the subject of the verses addressed to "H. C. when six years old." The piece to "Memory" arose out of similar feelings.

OFT have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,  
Fragments of far-off melodies,  
With ear not coveting the whole,  
A part so charmed the pensive soul.  
While a dark storm before my sight  
Was yielding, on a mountain height



Loose vapours have I watched, that won  
 Prismatic colours from the sun;  
 Nor felt a wish that heaven would show  
 The image of its perfect bow. 10  
 What need, then, of these finished Strains?  
 Away with counterfeit Remains!  
 An abbey in its lone recess,  
 A temple of the wilderness,  
 Wrecks though they be, announce, with  
 feeling

The majesty of honest dealing.  
 Spirit of Ossian! if imbound  
 In language thou may'st yet be found,  
 If aught (intrusted to the pen  
 Or floating on the tongues of men. 20  
 Albeit shattered and impaired)  
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,  
 In concert with memorial claim  
 Of old grey stone, and high-born name  
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave  
 Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,  
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,  
 Interpret that Original,

And for presumptuous wrongs atone;—  
 Authentic words be given, or none! 30  
 Time is not blind;—yet He, who spares  
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,  
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite  
 On all that marked the primal flight  
 Of the poetic ecstasy  
 Into the land of mystery.  
 No tongue is able to rehearse  
 One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;  
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre  
 Supreme among the Elysian quire, 40  
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,  
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth  
 Why grieve for these, though past away  
 The music, and extinct the lay?  
 When thousands, by severer doom,  
 Full early to the silent tomb  
 Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed  
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed;  
 The garland withering on their brows;  
 Stung with remorse for broken vows; 50  
 Frantic—else how might they rejoice?  
 And friendless, by their own sad choice!  
 Hail, Bards of mightier grasp! on you  
 I chiefly call, the chosen Few,  
 Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,  
 Who faltered not, nor turned aside;  
 Whose lofty genius could survive  
 Privation, under sorrow thrive;  
 In whom the fiery Muse revered  
 The symbol of a snow-white beard. 60

Bedewed with meditative tears  
 Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul! though distant times  
 Produced you nursed in various climes,  
 Ye, when the orb of life had waned,  
 A plenitude of love retained:  
 Hence, while in you each sad regret  
 By corresponding hope was met,  
 Ye lingered among human kind,  
 Sweet voices for the passing wind,  
 Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,  
 Though smiling on the last hill top!  
 Such to the tender-hearted maid  
 Even ere her joys begin to fade;  
 Such, haply, to the rugged chief  
 By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief;  
 Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,  
 Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,  
 The Son of Fingal; such was blind  
 Mæonides of ampler mind; 80  
 Such Milton, to the fountain head  
 Of glory by Urania led!

## XXVII

## CAVE OF STAFFA

1833. 1835

We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,  
 Not One of us has felt the far-famed sight;  
 How *could* we feel it? each the other's blight,  
 Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.  
 O for those motions only that invite  
 The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave  
 By the breeze entered, and wave after wave  
 Softly embosoming the timid light!  
 And by *one* Votary who at will might stand  
 Gazing and take into his mind and heart,  
 With undistracted reverence, the effect  
 Of those proportions where the almighty  
 hand  
 That made the worlds, the sovereign Archi-  
 tect,  
 Has deigned to work as if with human Art!

## XXVIII

## CAVE OF STAFFA

AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED

1833. 1835

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit  
 school  
 For the presumptuous thoughts that would  
 assign

Mechanic laws to agency divine;  
And, measuring heaven by earth, would  
overrule

Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,  
Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed,  
Might seem designed to humble man, when  
proud

Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.  
Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic weight  
Of tide and tempest on the Structure's base,  
And flashing to that Structure's topmost  
height,

Ocean has proved its strength, and of its  
grace

In calms is conscious, finding for his freight  
Of softest music some responsive place.

## XXIX

## CAVE OF STAFFA

1833. 1835

YE shadowy Beings, that have rights and  
claims

In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,  
Where are ye? Driven or venturing to the  
spot,

Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin  
Frames,

And, by your mien and bearing knew your  
names;

And they could hear *his* ghostly song who  
trod

Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,  
While he struck his desolate harp without  
hopes or aims.

Vanished ye are, but subject to recall;  
Why keep *we* else the instincts whose dread  
law

Ruled here of yore, till what men felt they  
saw,

Not by black arts but magic natural!  
If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,  
Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade a  
Chief.

## XXX

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE  
PILLARS AT THE ENTRANCE  
OF THE CAVE

1833. 1835

HOPE smiled when your nativity was cast,  
Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers  
that brave

What Summer here escapes not, the fierce  
wave,

And whole artillery of the western blast,  
Battering the Temple's front, its long-drawn  
nave

Smiting, as if each moment were their last.  
But ye, bright Flowers on frieze and archi-  
trave

Survive, and once again the Pile stands fast:  
Calm as the Universe, from specular towers  
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure  
With mute astonishment, it stands sus-  
tained

Through every part in symmetry, to endure,  
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his  
hours,

As the supreme Artificer ordained.

## XXXI

## IONA

1833. 1835

ON to Iona! — What can she afford  
To *us* save matter for a thoughtful sigh,  
Heaved over ruin with stability

In urgent contrast? To diffuse the WORD  
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and  
Time's Lord)

Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom; but  
why,

Even for a moment, has our verse deplored  
Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their  
destiny?

And when, subjected to a common doom  
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles  
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,  
Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,  
Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,  
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants  
their praise.

## XXXII

## IONA

## UPON LANDING

1833. 1835

How sad a welcome! To each voyager  
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store  
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the  
shore

Where once came monk and nun with gen-  
tle stir,

Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.  
 Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful speck  
 Of novelty amid the sacred wreck  
 Strewn far and wide. Think, proud Philo-  
 sopher!  
 Fallen though she be, this Glory of the  
 west,  
 Still on her sons the beams of mercy shine;  
 And "hopes, perhaps more heavenly bright  
 than thine,  
 A grace by thee unsought and unpossessed,  
 A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine,  
 Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

XXXIII

THE BLACK STONES OF IONA

1833. 1835

See *Martin's Voyage among the Western Isles*.

HERE on their knees men swore: the stones  
 were black,  
 Black in the people's minds and words, yet  
 they  
 Were at that time, as now, in colour grey.  
 But what is colour, if upon the rack  
 Of conscience souls are placed by deeds  
 that lack  
 Concord with oaths? What differ night  
 and day  
 Then, when before the Perjured on his way  
 Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance  
 crack  
 Above his head uplifted in vain prayer  
 To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead  
 whom  
 He had insulted — Peasant, King, or Thane?  
 Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a  
 doom;  
 And, from invisible worlds at need laid  
 bare,  
 Come links for social order's awful chain.

XXXIV

1833. 1835

HOMEWARD we turn. Isle of Columba's  
 Cell,  
 Where Christian piety's soul-cheering  
 spark  
 (Kindled from Heaven between the light  
 and dark

Of time) shone like the morning-star, fare-  
 well! —  
 And fare thee well, to Fancy visible,  
 Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-  
 mark  
 For many a voyage made in her swift  
 bark,  
 When with more hues than in the rainbow  
 dwell  
 Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,  
 Extracting from clear skies and air serene,  
 And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,  
 That thickens, spreads, and, mingling fold  
 with fold,  
 Makes known, when thou no longer canst  
 be seen,  
 Thy whereabouts, to warn the approaching  
 sail.

XXXV

GREENOCK

1833. 1835

*Per me si va nella Città dolente*

WE have not passed into a doleful City,  
 We who were led to-day down a grim dell,  
 By some too boldly named "the Jaws of  
 Hell:"  
 Where be the wretched ones, the sights for  
 pity?  
 These crowded streets resound no plaintive  
 ditty: —  
 As from the hive where bees in summer  
 dwell,  
 Sorrow seems here excluded; and that  
 knell,  
 It neither damps the gay, nor checks the  
 witty.  
 Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,  
 Whose merchants Princes were, whose  
 decks were thrones;  
 Soon may the punctual sea in vain respire  
 To serve thy need, in union with that  
 Clyde  
 Whose nursling current brawls o'er mossy  
 stones,  
 The poor, the lonely, herdsman's joy and  
 pride.

XXXVI

1833. 1835

Mosgiel was thus pointed out to me by a  
 young man on the top of the coach on my way

from Glasgow to Kilmarnock. It is remarkable that, though Burns lived some time here, and during much the most productive period of his poetical life, he nowhere adverts to the splendid prospects stretching towards the sea and bounded by the peaks of Arran on one part, which in clear weather he must have had daily before his eyes. In one of his poetical effusions he speaks of describing "fair Nature's face" as a privilege on which he sets a high value; nevertheless, natural appearances rarely take a lead in his poetry. It is as a human being, eminently sensitive and intelligent, and not as a poet, clad in his priestly robes and carrying the ensigns of sacerdotal office, that he interests and affects us. Whether he speaks of rivers, hills, and woods, it is not so much on account of the properties with which they are absolutely endowed, as relatively to local patriotic remembrances and associations, or as they ministered to personal feelings, especially those of love, whether happy or otherwise; — yet it is not always so. Soon after we had passed Mosgiel Farm we crossed the Ayr, murmuring and winding through a narrow woody hollow. His line — "Auld hermit Ayr strays through his woods" — came at once to my mind with Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, and Doon, — Ayrshire streams over which he breathes a sigh as being unnamed in song; and surely his own attempts to make them known were as successful as his heart could desire.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride  
Towards a low roof with green trees half concealed,  
"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very field

Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy." Far and wide

A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried

Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;

And, by that simple notice, the repose  
Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.

Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or stone"

Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower

Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour

Have passed away; less happy than the One

That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to prove

The tender charm of poetry and love.

## XXXVII

THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBER-  
LAND

1833. 1835

"Nature gives thee flowers that have no rivals among British bowers." This can scarcely be true to the letter; but, without stretching the point at all, I can say that the soil and air appear more congenial with many upon the banks of this river than I have observed in any other parts of Great Britain.

EDEN! till now thy beauty had I viewed  
By glimpses only, and confess with shame  
That verse of mine, whate'er its varying mood,

Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet name:

Yet fetched from Paradise that honour came,

Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee flowers

That have no rivals among British bowers;  
And thy bold rocks are worthy of their fame.

Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at length I pay

To my life's neighbour dues of neighbour-hood;

But I have traced thee on thy winding way  
With pleasure sometimes by this thought restrained —

For things far off we toil, while many a good

Not sought, because too near, is never gained.

## XXXVIII

## MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD

by Nollekens

IN WETHERAL CHURCH, NEAR CORBY,  
ON THE BANKS OF THE EDEN

1833. 1835

Before this monument was put up in the Church at Wetheral, I saw it in the sculptor's studio. Nollekens, who, by the bye, was a strange and grotesque figure that interfered much with one's admiration of his works, showed me at the same time the various models in clay which he had made, one after another, of the Mother and her Infant: the improvement on each was surprising; and how so much grace,

beauty, and tenderness had come out of such a head I was sadly puzzled to conceive. Upon a window-seat in his parlour lay two casts of faces, one of the Duchess of Devonshire, so noted in her day; and the other of Mr. Pitt, taken after his death, a ghastly resemblance, as these things always are, even when taken from the living subject, and more ghastly in this instance from the peculiarity of the features. The heedless and apparently neglectful manner in which the faces of these two persons were left—the one so distinguished in London Society, and the other upon whose counsels and public conduct, during a most momentous period, depended the fate of this great Empire and perhaps of all Europe—afforded a lesson to which the dullest of casual visitors could scarcely be insensible. It touched me the more because I had so often seen Mr. Pitt upon his own ground at Cambridge and upon the floor of the House of Commons.

STRETCHED on the dying Mother's lap, lies dead

Her new-born Babe; dire ending of bright hope!

But Sculpture here, with the divinest scope  
Of luminous faith, heavenward hath raised  
that head

So patiently; and through one hand has spread

A touch so tender for the insensate Child—  
(Earth's lingering love to parting reconciled,

Brief parting, for the spirit is all but fled) —  
That we, who contemplate the turns of life  
Through this still medium, are consoled and cheered;

Feel with the Mother, think the severed Wife

Is less to be lamented than revered;  
And own that Art, triumphant over strife  
And pain, hath powers to Eternity endeared.

XXXIX

SUGGESTED BY THE FORE-  
GOING

1833. 1835

TRANQUILLITY! the sovereign aim wert thou

In heathen schools of philosophic lore;  
Heart-stricken by stern destiny of yore  
The Tragic Muse thee served with thoughtful vow;

And what of hope Elysium could allow  
Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore  
Peace to the Mourner. But when He who  
wore

The crown of thorns around his bleeding brow

Warmed our sad being with celestial light,  
Then Arts which still had drawn a softening grace

From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,  
'Communed with that Idea face to face:  
And move around it now as planets run,  
Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

XL

NUNNERY

1833. 1835

I became acquainted with the walks of Nunnery when a boy: they are within easy reach of a day's pleasant excursion from the town of Penrith, where I used to pass my summer holidays under the roof of my maternal Grandfather. The place is well worth visiting; though, within these few years, its privacy, and therefore the pleasure which the scene is so well fitted to give, has been injuriously affected by walks cut in the rocks on that side the stream which had been left in its natural state.

THE floods are roused, and will not soon  
be weary;

Down from the Pennine Alps how fiercely sweeps

CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary!

He raves, or through some moody passage creeps

Plotting new mischief — out again he leaps  
Into broad light, and sends, through regions airy,

That voice which soothed the Nuns while on the steep

They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful Mary.

That union ceased: then, cleaving easy walks

Through crags, and smoothing paths beset with danger,

Came studious Taste; and many a pensive stranger

Dreams on the banks, and to the river talks.  
What change shall happen next to Nunnery Dell?

Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!

## XLI

STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND  
RAILWAYS

1833. 1835

MOTIONS and Means, on land and sea at  
war

With old poetic feeling, not for this,  
Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss !  
Nor shall your presence, howsoe'er it mar  
The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar  
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense  
Of future change, that point of vision,  
whence

May be discovered what in soul ye are.  
In spite of all that beauty may disown  
In your harsh features, Nature doth em-  
brace

Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and Time,  
Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother  
Space,

Accepts from your bold hands the proffered  
crown

Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer  
sublime.

## XLII

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY  
CALLED LONG MEG AND HER  
DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE  
RIVER EDEN

1833. 1835

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,  
Fell suddenly upon my Spirit — cast  
From the dread bosom of the unknown  
past,

When first I saw that family forlorn.  
Speak Thou, whose massy strength and  
stature scorn

The power of years — pre-eminent, and  
placed

Apart, to overlook the circle vast —  
Speak, Giant-mother ! tell it to the Morn  
While she dispels the cumbrous shades of  
Night;

Let the Moon hear, emerging from a  
cloud;

At whose behest uprose on British ground  
That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round  
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the  
infinite

The inviolable God, that tames the proud !

## XLIII

## LOWTHER

1833. 1835

"Cathedral pomp." It may be questioned  
whether this union was in the contemplation of  
the artist when he planned the edifice. How-  
ever this might be, a poet may be excused for  
taking the view of the subject presented in this  
Sonnet.

LOWTHER ! in thy majestic Pile are seen  
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord  
With the baronial castle's sterner mien;  
Union significant of God adored,  
And charters won and guarded by the  
sword

Of ancient honour; whence that goodly  
state

Of polity which wise men venerate,  
And will maintain, if God his help afford.  
Hourly the democratic torrent swells;  
For airy promises and hopes suborned  
The strength of backward-looking thoughts  
is scorned.

Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,  
With what ye symbolise; authentic Story  
Will say, Ye disappeared with England's  
Glory !

## XLIV

## TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE

1833. 1835

"Magistratus indicat virum"

LONSDALE ! it were unworthy of a Guest,  
Whose heart with gratitude to thee in-  
clines,

If he should speak, by fancy touched, of  
signs

On thy Abode harmoniously imprest,  
Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest  
How in thy mind and moral frame agree  
Fortitude, and that Christian Charity  
Which, filling, consecrates the human breast.  
And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach  
With truth, "THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS  
THE MAN;"

That searching test thy public course has  
stood;

As will be owned alike by bad and good,  
Soon as the measuring of life's little span  
Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's  
reach.

XLV  
THE SOMNAMBULIST

1833. 1835

This poem might be dedicated to my friends, Sir G. Beaumont and Mr. Rogers, jointly. While we were making an excursion together in this part of the Lake District we heard that Mr. Glover, the artist, while lodging at Lyluph's Tower, had been disturbed by a loud shriek, and upon rising he had learnt that it had come from a young woman in the house who was in the habit of walking in her sleep. In that state she had gone downstairs, and, while attempting to open the outer door, either from some difficulty or the effect of the cold stone upon her feet, had uttered the cry which alarmed him. It seemed to us all that this might serve as a hint for a poem, and the story here told was constructed and soon after put into verse by me as it now stands.

List, ye who pass by Lyluph's Tower

At eve; how softly then

Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,

Speak from the woody glen !

Fit music for a solemn vale !

And holier seems the ground

To him who catches on the gale

The spirit of a mournful tale,

Embodied in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon

The Pleasure-house is reared,

As story says, in antique days

A stern-browed house appeared;

Foil to a Jewel rich in light

There set, and guarded well;

Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,

Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight

Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,

To make this Gem their own,

Came Barons bold, with store of gold,

And Knights of high renown;

But one She prized, and only one;

Sir Eglamore was he;

Full happy season, when was known,

Ye Dales and Hills ! to you alone

Their mutual loyalty —

Known chiefly, Aira ! to thy glen,

Thy brook, and bowers of holly;

Where Passion caught what Nature taught,

That all but love is folly;

31

Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play;

Doubt came not, nor regret —

To trouble hours that winged their way,

As if through an immortal day

Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long

Sequestered with repose;

Best throve the fire of chaste desire,

Fanned by the breath of foes.

"A conquering lance is beauty's test,

And proves the Lover true;"

So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed

The drooping Emma to his breast,

And looked a blind adieu.

They parted. — Well with him it fared

Through wide-spread regions errant;

A knight of proof in love's behoof.

The thirst of fame his warrant:

And She her happiness can build

50

On woman's quiet hours;

Though faint, compared with spear and

shield,

The solace beads and masses yield,

And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard

Her 'Champion's praise recounted;

Though brain would swim, and eyes grow

dim,

And high her blushes mounted;

Or when a bold heroic lay

She warbled from full heart;

60

Delightful blossoms for the May

Of absence ! but they will not stay,

Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills

Whatever path he chooses;

As if his orb, that owns no curb,

Received the light hers loses.

He comes not back; an ampler space

Requires for nobler deeds;

He ranges on from place to place,

70

Till of his doings is no trace,

But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past

Her spirit finds its centre;

Clear sight She has of what he was,

And that would now content her.

"Still is he my devoted Knight?"

The tear in answer flows;

Month falls on month with heavier weight;  
Day sickens round her, and the night <sup>80</sup>  
Is empty of repose.

In sleep She sometimes walked abroad,  
Deep sighs with quick words blending,  
Like that pale Queen whose hands are  
seen

With fancied spots contending;  
But *she* is innocent of blood, —  
The moon is not more pure  
That shines aloft, while through the wood  
She thrills her way, the sounding Flood  
Her melancholy lure! <sup>90</sup>

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,  
And owls alone are waking,  
In white arrayed, glides on the Maid  
The downward pathway taking,  
That leads her to the torrent's side  
And to a holly bower;  
By whom on this still night desiered?  
By whom in that lone place espied?  
By thee, Sir Eglamore!

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,  
His coming step has thwarted, <sup>101</sup>  
Beneath the boughs that heard their  
vows,  
Within whose shade they parted.  
Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see!  
Perplexed her fingers seem,  
As if they from the holly tree  
Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly  
Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre? Why intent  
To violate the Tree, <sup>110</sup>  
Thought Eglamore, by which I swore  
Unfading constancy?  
Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,  
To her I left, shall prove  
That bliss is ne'er so surely won  
As when a circuit has been run  
Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,  
He moved with stealthy pace;  
And, drawing nigh, with his living eye, <sup>120</sup>  
He recognised the face;  
And whispers caught, and speeches small,  
Some to the green-leaved tree,  
Some muttered to the torrent-fall; —  
"Roar on, and bring him with thy call;  
I heard, and so may He!"

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew  
If Emma's Ghost it were,  
Or boding Shade, or if the Maid  
Her very self stood there. <sup>130</sup>  
He touched; what followed who shall  
tell?

The soft touch snapped the thread  
Of slumber — shrieking back she fell,  
And the Stream whirled her down the  
dell  
Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight! — when on firm  
ground  
The rescued Maiden lay,  
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,  
Confusion passed away;  
She heard, ere to the throne of grace <sup>140</sup>  
Her faithful Spirit flew,  
His voice — beheld his speaking face;  
And, dying, from his own embrace,  
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life:  
Brief words may speak the rest;  
Within the dell he built a cell,  
And there was Sorrow's guest;  
In hermits' weeds repose he found, <sup>150</sup>  
From vain temptations free;  
Beside the torrent dwelling — bound  
By one deep heart-controlling sound,  
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,  
Nor fear memorial lays,  
Where clouds that spread in solemn shade,  
Are edged with golden rays!  
Dear art thou to the light of heaven,  
Though minister of sorrow; <sup>160</sup>  
Sweet is thy voice at pensive even;  
And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,  
Shalt take thy place with Yarrow!

# XLVI

TO CORDELIA M—

HALLSTEDS, ULLSWATER

1833. 1835

NOT in the mines beyond the western main,  
You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,  
Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has  
wrought



Into this flexible yet faithful Chain;  
 Nor is it silver of romantic Spain  
 But from our loved Helvellyn's depths was  
     brought,  
 Our own domestic mountain. Thing and  
     thought  
 Mix strangely; trifles light, and partly  
     vain,  
 Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler  
     being:  
 Yes, Lady, while about your neck is  
     wound  
 (Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright  
     cord,  
 What witchery, for pure gifts of inward  
     seeing,  
 Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's  
     Lord,  
 For precious tremblings in your bosom  
     found!

## COMPOSED BY THE SEASHORE

1833. 1845

These lines were suggested during my residence under my Son's roof at Moresby, on the coast near Whitehaven, at the time when I was composing those verses among the "Evening Voluntaries" that have reference to the sea. It was in that neighbourhood I first became acquainted with the ocean and its appearances and movements. My infancy and early childhood were passed at Cockermouth, about eight miles from the coast, and I well remember that mysterious awe with which I used to listen to anything said about storms and shipwrecks. Sea-shells of many descriptions were common in the town; and I was not a little surprised when I heard that Mr. Lander had denounced me as a plagiarist from himself for having described a boy applying a sea-shell to his ear and listening to it for intimations of what was going on in its native element. This I had done myself scores of times, and it was a belief among us that we could know from the sound whether the tide was ebbing or flowing.

WHAT mischief cleaves to unsubdued regret,

How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset;  
 How baffled projects on the spirit prey,  
 And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,  
 The Sailor knows; he best, whose lot is cast  
 On the relentless sea that holds him fast

## XLVII

1833. 1835

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,  
 While a fair region round the traveller lies  
 Which he forbears again to look upon;  
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
 Let us break off all commerce with the  
     Muse:  
 With Thought and Love companions of our  
     way,  
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
     dews  
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

On chance dependent, and the fickle star  
 Of power, through long and melancholy war.  
 O sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,  
 Daily to think on old familiar doors,  
 Heartils loved in childhood, and ancestral  
     floors;  
 Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,  
 To ruminate on that delightful home  
 Which with the dear Betrothed *was* to  
     come;  
 Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye  
 Never but in the world of memory;  
 Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest  
     range  
 Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of  
     change,  
 And if not so, whose perfect joy makes  
     sleep  
 A thing too bright for breathing man to  
     keep.  
 Hail to the virtues which that perilous life  
 Extracts from Nature's elemental strife;  
 And welcome glory won in battles fought  
 As bravely as the foe was keenly sought.  
 But to each gallant Captain and his crew  
 A less imperious sympathy is due,  
 Such as my verse now yields, while moon-  
     beams play  
 On the mute sea in this unruffled bay;  
 Such as will promptly flow from every  
     breast,

Where good men, disappointed in the quest  
Of wealth and power and honours, long for  
rest;

Or, having known the splendours of success,  
Sigh for the obscurities of happiness.

“NOT IN THE LUCID INTER-  
VALS OF LIFE”

1834. 1835

The lines following “nor do words” were  
written with Lord Byron’s character, as a poet,  
before me, and that of others, his contempo-  
raries, who wrote under like influences.

Not in the lucid intervals of life  
That come but as a curse to party-strife;  
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh  
Of languor puts his rosy garland by;  
Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave  
Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon’s  
cave —

Is Nature felt, or can be; nor do words,  
Which practised talent readily affords,  
Prove that her hand has touched responsive  
chords;

Nor has her gentle beauty power to move 10  
With genuine rapture and with fervent love  
The soul of Genius, if he dare to take  
Life’s rule from passion craved for passion’s  
sake;

Untaught that meekness is the cherished  
bent

Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who is innocent? By grace divine,  
Not otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,  
Through good and evil thine, in just degree  
Of rational and manly sympathy.

To all that Earth from pensive hearts is  
stealing, 20

And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes re-  
vealing,

Add every charm the Universe can show  
Through every change its aspects undergo --  
Care may be respite, but not repealed;  
No perfect cure grows on that bounded  
field.

Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,  
If He, through whom alone our conflicts  
cease,

Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,  
Come not to speed the Soul’s deliverance;  
To the distempered Intellect refuse 30  
His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE

1834. 1835

The linnet’s warble, sinking towards a  
close,

Hints to the thrush ’t is time for their re-  
pose;

The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and  
again

The monitor revives his own sweet strain;  
But both will soon be mastered, and the copse

Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,

Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest

The throng of rooks, that now, from twig  
or nest,

(After a steady flight on home-bound wings,

And a last game of mazy hoverings 10

Around their ancient grove) with cawing  
noise

Disturb the liquid music’s equipoise.

O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy  
song

Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so  
strong

That listening sense is pardonably cheated

Where wood or stream by thee was never  
greeted.

Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,

Were not some gifts withheld by jealous  
hands,

This hour of deepening darkness here would  
be

As a fresh morning for new harmony; 20

And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of  
Night:

A dawn she has both beautiful and bright,  
When the East kindles with the full moon’s

light;

Not like the rising sun’s impatient glow

Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow

Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual pro-  
gress led,

For sway profoundly felt as widely spread;

To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,

And to the soldier’s trumpet-wearied ear;

How welcome wouldst thou be to this green  
Vale 31

Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Nightin-  
gale!

From the warm breeze that bears thee on,  
alight

At will, and stay thy migratory flight;

Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or  
fount,

Who shall complain, or call thee to account ?  
 The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they  
 That ever walk content with Nature's  
     way,  
 God's goodness — measuring bounty as it  
     may;  
 For whom the gravest thought of what  
     they miss, <sup>40</sup>  
 Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,  
 Is with that wholesome office satisfied,  
 While unrepining sadness is allied  
 In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

'SOFT AS A CLOUD IS YON  
 BLUE RIDGE"

1834. 1835

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge — the  
     Mere  
 Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless,  
     clear,  
 And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,  
 Deeper than ocean, in the immensity  
 Of its vague mountains and unreal sky !  
 But, from the process in that still retreat,  
 Turn to minuter changes at our feet;  
 Observe how dewy Twilight has with-  
     drawn  
 The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,  
 And has restored to view its tender green,  
 That, while the sun rode high, was lost  
     beneath their dazzling sheen.  
 — An emblem this of what the sober Hour  
 Can do for minds disposed to feel its power !  
 Thus oft, when we in vain have wished  
     away  
 The petty pleasures of the garish day,  
 Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping  
     host  
 (Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his  
     post)  
 And leaves the disencumbered spirit free  
 To reassume a staid simplicity.  
 'Tis well — but what are helps of time  
     and place,  
 When wisdom stands in need of nature's  
     grace;  
 Why do good thoughts, invoked or not,  
     descend,  
 Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues  
     to befriend;  
 If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,  
 "I come to open out, for fresh display,  
 The elastic vanities of yesterday" ?

"THE LEAVES THAT RUSTLED  
 ON THIS OAK-CROWNED HILL"

1834. 1835

Composed by the side of Grasmere lake. The mountains that enclose the vale, especially towards Easdale, are most favourable to the reverberation of sound. There is a passage in the "Excursion," towards the close of the fourth book, where the voice of the raven in flight is traced through the modifications it undergoes, as I have often heard it in that vale and others of this district.

"Often, at the hour  
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,  
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
 One voice — the solitary raven."

THE leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned  
     hill,  
 And sky that danced among those leaves,  
     are still;  
 Rest smooths the way for sleep; in field and  
     bower  
 Soft shades and dews have shed their  
     blended power  
 On drooping eyelid and the closing flower;  
 Sound is there none at which the faintest  
     heart  
 Might leap, the weakest nerve of supersti-  
     tion start;  
 Save when the Owllet's unexpected scream  
 Pierces the ethereal vault; and ('mid the  
     gleam  
 Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream, <sup>10</sup>  
 From the hushed vale's realities, transferred  
 To the still lake) the imaginative Bird  
 Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not un-  
     heard.  
 Grave Creature ! — whether, while the  
     moon shines bright  
 On thy wings opened wide for smoothest  
     flight,  
 Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,  
 Rising from what may once have been a  
     lady's bower;  
 Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy  
     mew  
 At the dim centre of a churchyard yew;  
 Or, from a rifted crag or ivy tod  
 Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,  
 Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek  
     or shout,  
 A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts —  
 May the night never come, nor day be seen,  
 When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy  
     mien !

In classic ages men perceived a soul  
Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl!  
Thee Athens revered in the studious  
grove;

And, near the golden sceptre grasped by Jove,  
His Eagle's favourite perch, while round  
him sate 30

The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,  
Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side: --  
Hark to that second larum! — far and wide  
The elements have heard, and rock and  
cave replied.

### THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY HYMN

1834. 1835

Bishop Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns are, as they deserve to be, familiarly known. Many other hymns have also been written on the same subject; but, not being aware of any being designed for noon-day, I was induced to compose these verses. Often one has occasion to observe cottage children carrying, in their baskets, dinner to their Fathers engaged with their daily labours in the fields and woods. How gratifying would it be to me could I be assured that any portion of these stanzas had been sung by such a domestic concert under such circumstances. A friend of mine has told me that she introduced this Hymn into a village-school which she superintended, and the stanzas in succession furnished her with texts to comment upon in a way which without difficulty was made intelligible to the children, and in which they obviously took delight, and they were taught to sing it to the tune of the old 100th Psalm.

Up to the throne of God is borne  
The voice of praise at early morn,  
And he accepts the punctual hymn  
Sung as the light of day grows dim:

Nor will he turn his ear aside  
From holy offerings at noontide:  
Then here reposing let us raise  
A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light,  
We need not toil from morn to night; 10  
The respite of the mid-day hour  
Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,  
That, drawn from this one hour of rest,

Are with a ready heart bestowed  
Upon the service of our God!

Each field is then a hallowed spot,  
An altar is in every man's cot,  
A church in every grove that spreads  
Its living roof above our heads. 20

Look up to Heaven! the industrious Sun  
Already half his race hath run;  
He cannot halt nor go astray,  
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord! since his rising in the East,  
If we have faltered or transgressed,  
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,  
What yet remains of this day's course:

Help with thy grace, through life's short  
day,  
Our upward and our downward way; 30  
And glorify for us the west,  
When we shall sink to final rest.

### THE REDBREAST

SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND  
COTTAGE

1834. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. All our cats having been banished the house, it was soon frequented by redbreasts. Two or three of them, when the window was open, would come in, particularly when Mrs. Wordsworth was breakfasting alone, and hop about the table picking up the crumbs. My sister being then confined to her room by sickness, as, dear creature, she still is, had one that, without being caged, took up its abode with her, and at night used to perch upon a nail from which a picture had hung. It used to sing and fan her face with its wings in a manner that was very touching.

DRIVEN in by Autumn's sharpening air  
From half-stripped woods and pastures bare,  
Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home:  
Not like a beggar is he come,  
But enters as a looked-for guest,  
Confiding in his ruddy breast,  
As if it were a natural shield  
Charged with a blazon on the field,  
Due to that good and pious deed  
Of which we in the Ballad read. 10

But pensive fancies putting by,  
 And wild-wood sorrows, speedily  
 He plays the expert ventriloquist;  
 And, caught by glimpses now — now missed,  
 Puzzles the listener with a doubt  
 If the soft voice he throws about  
 Comes from within doors or without !  
 Was ever such a sweet confusion,  
 Sustained by delicate illusion ?  
 He 's at your elbow — to your feeling 20  
 The notes are from the floor or ceiling;  
 And there 's a riddle to be guessed,  
 'Till you have marked his heaving chest,  
 And busy throat whose sink and swell,  
 Betray the Elf that loves to dwell  
 In Robin's bosom, as a chosen cell.

Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird  
 If seen, and with like pleasure stirred  
 Commend him, when he 's only heard.  
 But small and fugitive our gain 30  
 Compared with *hers* who long hath lain,  
 With languid limbs and patient head  
 Reposing on a lone sick-bed;  
 Where now, she daily hears a strain  
 That cheats her of too busy cares,  
 Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.  
 And who but this dear Bird beguiled  
 The fever of that pale-faced Child;  
 Now cooling, with his passing wing,  
 Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring: 40  
 Recalling now, with descent soft  
 Shed round her pillow from aloft,  
 Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,  
 And the invisible sympathy  
 Of "Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,  
 Blessing the bed she lies upon" ?  
 And sometimes, just as listening ends  
 In slumber, with the cadence blends  
 A dream of that low-warbled hymn  
 Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim 50  
 Lamps of faith, now burning dim,  
 Say that the Cherubs, carved in stone,  
 When clouds gave way at dead of night  
 And the ancient church was filled with  
 light,

Used to sing in heavenly tone,  
 Above and round the sacred places  
 They guard, with winged baby-faces.  
 Thrice happy Creature ! in all lands  
 Nurtured by hospitable hands:  
 Free entrance to this cot has he, 60  
 Entrance and exit both *yet* free;  
 And, when the keen unruffled weather  
 That thus brings man and bird together,  
 Shall with its pleasantness be past,

And casement closed and door made fast,  
 To keep at bay the howling blast,  
*He* needs not fear the season's rage,  
 For the whole house is Robin's cage.  
 Whether the bird flit here or there,  
 O'er table *lilt*, or perch on chair, 70  
 Though some may frown and make a stir,  
 To scare him as a trespasser,  
 And he belike will flinch or start,  
 Good friends he has to take his part;  
 One chiefly, who with voice and look  
 Pleads for him from the chimney-nook,  
 Where sits the Dame, and wears away  
 Her long and vacant holiday;  
 With images about her heart,  
 Reflected from the years gone by, 80  
 On human nature's second infancy.

## LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE  
 PENCIL OF F. STONE

1834. 1835

This Portrait has hung for many years in our principal sitting-room, and represents J. Q. as she was when a girl. The picture, though it is somewhat thinly painted, has much merit in tone and general effect. It is chiefly valuable, however, from the sentiment that pervades it. The Anecdote of the saying of the Monk in sight of Titian's picture was told in this house by Mr. Wilkie, and was, I believe, first communicated to the public in this poem, the former portion of which I was composing at the time. Southey heard the story from Miss Hutchinson, and transferred it to the "Doctor"; but it is not easy to explain how my friend Mr. Rogers, in a note subsequently added to his "Italy," was led to speak of the same remarkable words having many years before been spoken in his hearing by a monk or priest in front of a picture of the Last Supper, placed over a Refectory-table in a convent at Padua.

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care  
 Due to the day's unfinished task; of pen  
 Or book regardless, and of that fair scene  
 In Nature's prodigality displayed  
 Before my window, oftentimes and long  
 I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam  
 Of beauty never ceases to enrich 60  
 The common light; whose stillness charms  
 the air,  
 Or seems to charm it, into like repose; 9  
 Whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,

Surpasses sweetest music. There she sits  
With emblematic purity attired  
In a white vest, white as her marble neck  
Is, and the pillar of the throat would be  
But for the shadow by the drooping chin  
Cast into that recess — the tender shade,  
The shade and light, both there and every-

where,  
And through the very atmosphere she  
breathes,  
Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously, with  
skill

That might from nature have been learnt  
in the hour 20

When the lone shepherd sees the morning  
spread

Upon the mountains. Look at her, whoc'er  
Thou be that, kindling with a poet's soul,  
Hast loved the painter's true Promethean  
craft

Intensely — from Imagination take  
The treasure, — what mine eyes behold,  
see thou,

Even though the Atlantic ocean roll be-  
tween.

A silver line, that runs from brow to  
crown

And in the middle parts the braided hair,  
Just serves to show how delicate a soil 30  
The golden harvest grows in; and those  
eyes,

Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky  
Whose azure depth their colour emulates,  
Must needs be conversant with upward  
looks,

Prayer's voiceless service; but now, seeking  
nought

And shunning nought, their own peculiar  
life

Of motion they renounce, and with the head  
Partake its inclination towards earth  
In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness  
Caught at the point where it stops short of  
sadness. 40

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make  
me

Thy confidant ! say, whence derived that air  
Of calm abstraction ? Can the ruling  
thought

Be with some lover far away, or one  
Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted faith ?  
Inapt conjecture ! Childhood here, a moon  
Crescent in simple loveliness serene,  
Has but approached the gates of woman-  
hood,

Not entered them; her heart is yet un-  
pierced

By the blind Archer-god; her fancy free: 50  
The fount of feeling if unsought elsewhere,  
Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies  
Across the slender wrist of the left arm  
Upon her lap reposing, holds — but mark  
How slackly, for the absent mind permits  
No firmer grasp — a little wild-flower,  
joined

As in a posy, with a few pale ears  
Of yellowing corn, the same that overtopped  
And in their common birthplace sheltered  
it

Till they were plucked together; a blue  
flower 60

Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed;  
But Ceres, in her garland, might have worn  
That ornament, unblamed. The floweret,  
held

In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she  
knows,

(Her Father told her so) in youth's gay  
dawn

Her Mother's favourite; and the orphan  
Girl,

In her own dawn — a dawn less gay and  
bright,

Loves it, while there in solitary peace  
She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.

— Not from a source less sacred is derived  
(Surely I do not err) that pensive air 71  
Of calm abstraction through the face dif-  
fused

And the whole person.

Words have something told  
More than the pencil can, and verily  
More than is needed, but the precious Art  
Forgives their interference — Art divine,  
That both creates and fixes, in despite  
Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath  
wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world  
of ours !

That posture, and the look of filial love 80  
Thinking of past and gone, with what is  
left

Dearly united, might be swept away  
From this fair Portrait's fleshy Archetype,  
Even by an innocent faun's slightest freak  
Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored  
To their lost place, or meet in harmony  
So exquisite; but *here* do they abide,  
Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art

Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,  
In visible quest of immortality, <sup>90</sup>  
Stretched forth with trembling hope? — In  
every realm,

From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,  
Thousands, in each variety of tongue  
That Europe knows, would echo this ap-  
peal;

One above all, a Monk who waits on God  
In the magnific Convent built of yore  
To sanctify the Escorial palace. He —  
Guiding, from cell to cell and room to  
room,

A British Painter (eminent for truth  
In character, and depth of feeling, shown  
By labours that have touched the hearts of  
kings, <sup>101</sup>

And are endeared to simple cottagers —  
Came, in that service, to a glorious work,  
Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful as when  
first

The appropriate Picture, fresh from Titian's  
hand,

Graced the Refectory: and there, while  
both

Stood with eyes fixed upon that master-  
piece,

The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear  
Breathed out these words: — "Here daily  
do we sit,

Thanks given to God for daily bread, and  
here <sup>110</sup>

Pondering the mischiefs of these restless  
times,

And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dis-  
persed,

Or changed and changing, I not seldom  
gaze

Upon this solemn Company unmoved  
By shock of circumstance, or lapse of  
years,

Until I cannot but believe that they —  
They are in truth the Substance, we the  
Shadows."

So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs  
Melting away within him like a dream  
Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to  
speak: <sup>120</sup>

And I, grown old, but in a happier land,  
Domestic Portrait! have to verse consigned  
In thy calm presence those heart-moving  
words:

Words that can soothe, more than they  
agitate;

Whose spirit, like the angel that went down

Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue  
Informs the fountain in the human breast  
Which by the visitation was disturbed.

— But why this stealing tear? Companion  
mute,

On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee  
well, <sup>130</sup>

My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell!

## THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED

1834. 1835

AMONG a grave fraternity of Monks,  
For One, but surely not for One alone,  
Triumphs, in that great work, the Painter's  
skill,

Humbling the body, to exalt the soul;  
Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong  
And dissolution and decay, the warm  
And breathing life of flesh, as if already  
Clothed with impassive majesty, and graced  
With no mean earnest of a heritage

Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou,  
too, <sup>10</sup>

With thy memorial flower, meek Portrait-  
ure!

From whose serene companionship I passed  
Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still;  
thou also —

Though but a simple object, into light  
Called forth by those affections that en-  
dear

The private hearth; though keeping thy  
sole seat

In singleness, and little tried by time,  
Creation, as it were, of yesterday —

With a congenial function art endued  
For each and all of us, together joined  
In course of nature under a low roof  
By charities and duties that proceed  
Out of the bosom of a wiser vow.

To a like salutary sense of awe  
Or sacred wonder, growing with the power  
Of meditation that attempts to weigh,  
In faithful scales, things and their oppo-  
sites,

Can thy enduring quiet gently raise  
A household small and sensitive, — whose  
love,

Dependent as in part its blessings are <sup>30</sup>  
Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved  
On earth, will be revived, we trust, in  
heaven.

TO A CHILD

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM

1834. 1835

This quatrain was extempore on observing this image, as I had often done, on the lawn of Rydal Mount. It was first written down in the Album of my God-daughter, Rotha Quillinan.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts:  
Of humblest Friends, bright Creature!  
scorn not one:

The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,  
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the Sun.

LINEs

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE COUNTESS OF LONSDALE. NOV. 5, 1834

1834. 1835

This is a faithful picture of that amiable Lady, as she then was. The youthfulness of figure and demeanour and habits, which she retained in almost unprecedented degree, departed a very few years after, and she died without violent disease by gradual decay before she reached the period of old age.

LADY! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,  
Among the Favoured, favoured not the least)

Left, 'mid the Records of this Book inscribed,

Deliberate traces, registers of thought  
And feeling, suited to the place and time  
That gave them birth: — months passed,  
and still this hand,

That had not been too timid to imprint  
Words which the virtues of thy Lord inspired,

Was yet not bold enough to write of Thee.  
And why that scrupulous reserve? In sooth

The blameless cause lay in the Theme itself.  
Flowers are there many that delight to strive

With the sharp wind, and seem to court  
the shower,

Yet are by nature careless of the sun  
Whether he shine on them or not; and some,

Where'er he moves along the unclouded sky,  
Turn a broad front full on his flattering beams:

Others do rather from their notice shrink,  
Loving the dewy shade, — a humble band,  
Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,  
Congenial with thy mind and character,  
High-born Augusta!

Witness, Towers and Groves!  
And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the  
honoured name

Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear witness

From thy most secret haunts; and ye  
Parterres,

Which She is pleased and proud to call her own,

Witness how oft upon my noble Friend  
Mute offerings, tribute from an inward sense

Of admiration and respectful love,  
Have waited — till the affections could no more

Endure that silence, and broke out in song,  
Snatches of music taken up and dropt

Like those self-solacing, those under, notes  
Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal leaves

Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only mine,  
The pleasure was, and no one heard the praise,

Checked, in the moment of its issue,  
checked

And reprehended, by a fancied blush  
From the pure qualities that called it forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Virtue's meed;

Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil  
That, while it only spreads a softening charm

O'er features looked at by discerning eyes,  
Hides half their beauty from the common gaze;

And thus, even on the exposed and breezy hill

Of lofty station, female goodness walks,  
When side by side with lunar gentleness,  
As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor

(Such the immunities of low estate,  
Plain Nature's enviable privilege,  
Her sacred recompence for many wants)

Open their hearts before Thee, pouring out  
All that they think and feel, with tears of joy;

And benedictions not unheard in heaven:  
And friend in the ear of friend, where speech is free

To follow truth, is eloquent as they.



Then let the Book receive in these prompt  
lines

A just memorial; and thine eyes consent  
To read that they, who mark thy course,  
behold

A life declining with the golden light 60  
Of summer, in the season of sere leaves;  
See cheerfulness undamped by stealing  
Time;

See studied kindness flow with easy stream,  
Illustrated with inborn courtesy;  
And an habitual disregard of self  
Balanced by vigilance for others' weal.

And shall the Verse not tell of lighter  
gifts

With these ennobling attributes conjoined  
And blended, in peculiar harmony,  
By Youth's surviving spirit? What agile  
grace! 70

A nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like form,  
Beheld with wonder; whether floor or  
path

Thou tread; or sweep — borne on the  
managed steed —

Fleet as the shadows, over down or field,  
Driven by strong winds at play among the  
clouds.

Yet one word more — one farewell word  
— a wish

Which came, but it has passed into a  
prayer —

That, as thy sun in brightness is declining,  
So — at an hour yet distant for *their* sakes  
Whose tender love, here faltering on the  
way 80

Of a divine love, will be forgiven —  
So may it set in peace, to rise again  
For everlasting glory won by faith.

## TO THE MOON

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE, — ON THE  
COAST OF CUMBERLAND

1835. 1836

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and  
com'st so near

To human life's unsettled atmosphere;  
Who lov'st with Night and Silence to par-  
take,

So might it seem, the cares of them that  
wake;

And, through the cottage-lattice softly  
peeping,

Dost shield from harm the humblest of the  
sleeping;

What pleasure once encompassed those  
sweet names

Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,  
An idolizing dreamer as of yore! —

I slight them all; and, on this sea-beat shore  
Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend 11

That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S  
FRIEND;

So call thee for heaven's grace through thee  
made known

By confidence supplied and mercy shown,  
When not a twinkling star or beacon's light

Abates the perils of a stormy night;  
And for less obvious benefits, that find

Their way, with thy pure help, to heart  
and mind;

Both for the adventurer starting in life's  
prime;

And veteran ranging round from clime to  
clime, 20

Long-baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,  
And wounds and weakness oft his labour's  
sole remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the winding  
Streams,

Empress of Night! are gladdened by thy  
beams;

A look of thine the wilderness pervades,  
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades;

Thou, chequering peaceably the minster's  
gloom,

Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's  
tomb;

Canst reach the Prisoner — to his grated  
cell 29

Welcome, though silent and intangible! —  
And lives there one, of all that come and go

On the great waters toiling to and fro,  
One, who has watched thee at some quiet  
hour

Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,  
Or crossed by vapoury streaks and clouds

that move

Catching the lustre they in part reprove —  
Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway

To call up thoughts that shun the glare of  
day,

And make the serious happier than the gay?  
Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly  
bright 40

Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,  
To fiercer mood the phrenzy-stricken brain,

Let me a compensating faith maintain;

That there's a sensitive, a tender, part  
Which thou canst touch in every human  
heart,  
For healing and composure. — But, at least  
And mightiest billows ever have confessed  
Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea  
Feels through her lowest depths thy  
sovereignty;  
So shines that countenance with especial  
grace  
On them who urge the keel her *plaints* to  
trace  
Furrowing its way right onward. The most  
rude,  
Cut off from home and country, may have  
stood —  
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his eye,  
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh —  
Touched by accordance of thy placid cheer,  
With some internal lights to memory dear,  
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the breast  
Tired with its daily share of earth's unrest, —  
Gentle awakenings, visitations meek; <sup>60</sup>  
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,  
Though it can wet with tears the hardest  
cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy  
cave  
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;  
Then, while the Sailor, 'mid an open sea  
Swept by a favouring wind that leaves  
thought free,  
Paces the deck — no star perhaps in sight,  
And nothing save the moving ship's own  
light  
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant  
night —  
Oft with his musings does thy image blend,  
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,  
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S  
FRIEND!

## TO THE MOON

RYDAL

1835. 1836

QUEEN of the stars! — so gentle, so benign,  
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,  
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver brow  
Warned thee these upper regions to forego,  
Alternate empire in the shades below —  
A Bard, who, lately near the wide-spread sea  
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up  
to thee

With grateful thoughts, doth now thy ris-  
ing hail  
From the close confines of a shadowy vale.  
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene, <sup>10</sup>  
Nor less attractive when by glimpses seen  
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that  
fair face,  
And all those attributes of modest grace,  
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked by  
fear,

Down to the green earth fetch thee from  
thy sphere,  
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!

O still beloved (for thine, meek Power,  
are charms

That fascinate the very Babe in arms,  
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs  
outright,

Spreading his little palms in his glad  
Mother's sight) <sup>20</sup>

O still beloved, once worshipped! Time,  
that frowns

In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,  
Spares thy mild splendour; still those far-  
shot beams

Tremble on dancing waves and rippling  
streams

With stainless touch, as chaste as when thy  
praise

Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;  
And through dark trials still dost thou  
explore

Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,  
When teeming Matrons — yielding to rude  
faith

In mysteries of birth and life and death <sup>30</sup>  
And painful struggle and deliverance —  
prayed

Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.  
What though the rites be swept away, the  
fanes

Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;  
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot, cease  
Love to promote and purity and peace;  
And Fancy, unproved, even yet may trace  
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless  
face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us — not blind  
To worlds unthought of till the searching  
mind <sup>40</sup>

Of Science laid them open to mankind —  
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens de-  
clare

God's glory; and acknowledging thy share  
In that blest charge; let us — without offence

To aught of highest, holiest influence —  
Receive whatever good 't is given thee to  
dispense.

May sage and simple, catching with one eye  
The moral intimations of the sky,  
Learn from thy course, where'er their own  
be taken,

"To look on tempests, and be never  
shaken;"

To keep with faithful step the appointed  
way,

Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,  
And from example of thy monthly range  
Gently to brook decline and fatal change;  
Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier  
scope,

Than thy revival yields, for gladsome hope!

#### WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB

1835. 1836

Light will be thrown upon the tragic circumstance alluded to in this poem when, after the death of Charles Lamb's Sister, his biographer, Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, shall be at liberty to relate particulars which could not, at the time his *Memoir* was written, be given to the public. Mary Lamb was ten years older than her brother, and has survived him as long a time. Were I to give way to my own feelings, I should dwell not only on her genius and intellectual powers, but upon the delicacy and refinement of manner which she maintained inviolable under most trying circumstances. She was loved and honoured by all her brother's friends; and others, some of them strange characters, whom his philanthropic peculiarities induced him to countenance. The death of C. Lamb himself was doubtless hastened by his sorrow for that of Coleridge, to whom he had been attached from the time of their being school-fellows at Christ's Hospital. Lamb was a good Latin scholar, and probably would have gone to college upon one of the school foundations but for the impediment in his speech. Had such been his lot, he would most likely have been preserved from the indulgences of social humours and fancies which were often injurious to himself, and causes of severe regret to his friends, without really benefiting the object of his misapplied kindness.

To a good Man of most dear memory  
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart  
From the great city where he first drew  
breath,

Was reared and taught; and humbly earned  
his bread,

To the strict labours of the merchant's desk  
By duty chained. Not seldom did those  
tasks

Tease, and the thought of time so spent  
depress,

His spirit, but the recompence was high;  
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire;  
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;  
And when the precious hours of leisure  
came,

Knowledge and wisdom, gained from con-  
verse sweet

With books, or while he ranged the crowded  
streets

With a keen eye, and overflowing heart:  
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,  
And poured out truth in works by thought-  
ful love

Inspired — works potent over smiles and  
tears.

And as round mountain-tops the lightning  
plays,

Thus innocently sported, breaking forth  
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy, so  
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all  
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.

From the most gentle creature nursed in  
fields

Had been derived the name he bore — a  
name,

Wherever Christian altars have been raised,  
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence;

And if in him meekness at times gave way,  
Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,  
Many and strange, that hung about his life;  
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged 30  
A soul by resignation sanctified:

And if too often, self-reproached, he felt  
That innocence belongs not to our kind,  
A power that never ceased to abide in  
him,

Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins  
That she can cover, left not his exposed  
To an unforgiving judgment from just  
Heaven.

Oh, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !

From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart  
Those simple lines flowed with an earnest  
wish,

Though but a doubting hope, that they  
might serve 40

Fitly to guard the precious dust of him

Whose virtues called them forth. That  
aim is missed;

For much that truth most urgently required  
Had from a faltering pen been asked in  
vain:

Yet, haply, on the printed page received,  
The imperfect record, there, may stand un-  
blamed

As long as verse of mine shall breathe the  
air

Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my  
Friend,

But more in show than truth; and from the  
fields,

And from the mountains, to thy rural grave  
Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er  
Its green untrodden turf, and blowing  
flowers;

And taking up a voice shall speak (tho' still  
Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity  
Which words less free presumed not even  
to touch)

Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit  
lamp

From infancy, through manhood, to the last  
Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour,  
Burnt on with ever-strengthening light,  
enshrined

Within thy bosom.

"Wonderful" hath been  
The love established between man and man,  
"Passing the love of women;" and between  
Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock  
joined

Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of  
love

Without whose blissful influence Paradise  
Had been no Paradise; and earth were now  
A waste where creatures bearing human  
form,

Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear,  
Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide  
on;

And let him grieve who cannot choose but  
grieve

That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,  
And her bright dower of clustering char-  
ities,

That, round his trunk and branches, might  
have clung

Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,

Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee  
Was given (say rather, thou of later birth  
Wert given to her) a Sister — 't is a word

Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek, so  
The self-restraining, and the ever-kind;  
In whom thy reason and intelligent heart  
Found — for all interests, hopes, and tender  
cares,

All softening, humanising, hallowing  
powers,

Whether withheld, or for her sake un-  
sought —

More than sufficient recompence!

Her love

(What weakness prompts the voice to tell  
it here?)

Was as the love of mothers; and when  
years,

Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called  
The long-protected to assume the part

Of a protector, the first filial tie

Was undissolved; and, in or out of sight,

Remained imperishably interwoven

With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting  
world,

Did they together testify of time

And season's difference — a double tree

With two collateral stems sprung from one  
root;

Such were they — such thro' life they *might*  
have been

In union, in partition only such;

Otherwise wrought the will of the Most  
High;

Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,

Still they were faithful; like two vessels  
launched

From the same beach one ocean to explore

With mutual help, and sailing — to their  
league

True, as inexorable winds, or bars

Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn

With thine, O silent and invisible Friend!

To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,

When reunited, and by choice withdrawn  
From miscellaneous converse, ye were  
taught

That the remembrance of foregone distress,  
And the worse fear of future ill (which oft

Doth hang around it, as a sickly child

Upon its mother) may be both alike

Disarmed of power to unsettle present good  
So prized, and things inward and outward  
held

In such an even balance, that the heart  
Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,

And in its depth of gratitude is still.

O gift divine of quiet sequestration !  
 The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,  
 And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,  
 Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves  
 To life-long singleness; but happier far  
 Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of  
 others,

A thousand times more beautiful appeared,  
 Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie  
 Is broken; yet why grieve? for Time but  
 holds

His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead 130  
 To the blest world where parting is un-  
 known.

#### EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG

1835. 1836

These verses were written extempore, immediately after reading a notice of the Ettrick Shepherd's death in the Newcastle paper, to the Editor of which I sent a copy for publication. The persons lamented in these verses were all either of my friends or acquaintance. In Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* an account is given of my first meeting with him in 1803. How the Ettrick Shepherd and I became known to each other has already been mentioned in these notes. He was undoubtedly a man of original genius, but of coarse manners and low and offensive opinions. Of Coleridge and Lamb I need not speak here. Crabbe I have met in London at Mr. Rogers's, but more frequently and favourably at Mr. Hoare's upon Hampstead Heath. Every spring he used to pay that family a visit of some length, and was upon terms of intimate friendship with Mrs. Hoare, and still more with her daughter-in-law, who has a large collection of his letters addressed to herself. After the Poet's decease, application was made to her to give up these letters to his biographer, that they, or at least part of them, might be given to the public. She hesitated to comply, and asked my opinion on the subject. "By no means," was my answer, grounded not upon any objection there might be to publishing a selection from these letters, but from an aversion I have always felt to meet idle curiosity by calling back the recently departed to become the object of trivial and familiar gossip. Crabbe obviously for the most part preferred the company of women to that of men, for this among other reasons, that he did not like to be put upon the stretch in general conversation: accordingly in miscel-

laneous society his *talk* was so much below what might have been expected from a man so deservedly celebrated, that to me it seemed trifling. It must upon other occasions have been of a different character, as I found in our rambles together on Hampstead Heath, and not so much from a readiness to communicate his knowledge of life and manners as of natural history in all its branches. His mind was inquisitive, and he seems to have taken refuge from the remembrance of the distresses he had gone through, in these studies and the employments to which they led. Moreover, such contemplations might tend profitably to counterbalance the painful truths which he had collected from his intercourse with mankind. Had I been more intimate with him, I should have ventured to touch upon his office as a minister of the Gospel, and how far his heart and soul were in it so as to make him a zealous and diligent labourer: in poetry, though he wrote much, as we all know, he assuredly was not so. I happened once to speak of pains as necessary to produce merit of a certain kind which I highly valued: his observation was — "It is not worth while." You are quite right, thought I, if the labour encroaches upon the time due to teach truth as a steward of the mysteries of God: if there be cause to fear *that*, write less: but, if poetry is to be produced at all, make what you do produce as good as you can. Mr. Rogers once told me that he expressed his regret to Crabbe that he wrote in his later works so much less correctly than in his earlier. "Yes," replied he, "but then I had a reputation to make, now I can afford to relax." Whether it was from a modest estimate of his own qualifications, or from causes less creditable, his motives for writing verse and his hopes and aims were not so high as is to be desired. After being silent for more than twenty years, he again applied himself to poetry, upon the spur of applause he received from the periodical publications of the day, as he himself tells us in one of his prefaces. Is it not to be lamented that a man who was so conversant with permanent truth, and whose writings are so valuable an acquisition to our country's literature, should have required an impulse from such a quarter? — Mrs. Hemans was unfortunate as a poetess in being obliged by circumstances to write for money, and that so frequently and so much, that she was compelled to look out for subjects wherever she could find them, and to write as expeditiously as possible. As a woman, she was to a considerable degree a spoilt child of the world. She had been early in life distinguished for talent, and poems of hers were published while she was a girl. She had also been handsome in

her youth, but her education had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies, that, one day while she was under my roof, I *purposely* directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased *Scales*, which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present; pointed out their utility (for her especial benefit), and said that no *ménage* ought to be without them. Mrs. Hemans, not in the least suspecting my drift, reported this saying, in a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity. Being disposed to make large allowances for the faults of her education and the circumstances in which she was placed, I felt most kindly disposed towards her, and took her part upon all occasions, and I was not a little affected by learning that after she withdrew to Ireland, a long and severe sickness raised her spirit as it depressed her body. This I heard from her most intimate friends, and there is striking evidence of it in a poem written and published not long before her death. These notices of Mrs. Hemans would be very unsatisfactory to her intimate friends, as indeed they are to myself, not so much for what is said, but what for brevity's sake is left unsaid. Let it suffice to add, there was much sympathy between us, and, if opportunity had been allowed me to see more of her, I should have loved and valued her accordingly; as it is, I remember her with true affection for her amiable qualities, and, above all, for her delicate and irreproachable conduct during her long separation from an unfeeling husband, whom she had been led to marry from the romantic notions of inexperienced youth. Upon this husband I never heard her cast the least reproach, nor did I ever hear her even name him, though she did not wholly forbear to touch upon her domestic position; but never so as that any fault could be found with her manner of adverting to it.

WHEN first, descending from the moor-lands,  
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide  
Along a bare and open valley,  
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,  
Through groves that had begun to shed  
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,  
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,  
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies; 10

And death upon the braes of Yarrow,  
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,  
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,  
Since every mortal power of Coleridge  
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,  
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:  
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,  
Has vanished from his lonely hearth. 20

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,  
Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother  
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber  
Were earlier raised, remain to hear  
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,  
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,  
Like London with its own black wreath, 30  
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-  
looking,  
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,  
Thou too art gone before; but why,  
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered, 40  
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,  
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;  
For Her who, ere her summer faded,  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep. 40

No more of old romantic sorrows,  
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid!  
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,  
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet  
dead.

UPON SEEING A COLOURED  
DRAWING OF THE BIRD OF  
PARADISE IN AN ALBUM

1835. 1836

I cannot forbear to record that the last seven  
lines of this Poem were composed in bed dur-  
ing the night of the day on which my sister

Sara Hutchinson died about 6 P.M., and it was the thought of her innocent and beautiful life that, through faith, prompted the words —

"On wings that fear no glance of God's pure sight,  
No tempest from his breath."

The reader will find two poems on pictures of this bird among my Poems. I will here observe that in a far greater number of instances than have been mentioned in these notes one poem has, as in this case, grown out of another, either because I felt the subject had been inadequately treated, or that the thoughts and images suggested in course of composition have been such as I found interfered with the unity indispensable to every work of art, however humble in character.

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray?  
Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;  
How could he think of the live creature —  
gay

With a divinity of colours, drest  
In all her brightness, from the dancing crest  
Far as the last gleam of the filmy train  
Extended and extending to sustain  
The motions that it graces — and forbear  
To drop his pencil! Flowers of every clime  
Depicted on these pages smile at time;  
And gorgeous insects copied with nice care  
Are here, and likenesses of many a shell  
Tossed ashore by restless waves,  
Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from  
caves

Where sea-nymphs might be proud to  
dwell:

But whose rash hand (again I ask) could  
dare,

'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous shows,  
To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose;  
Could imitate for indolent survey,  
Perhaps for touch profane,  
Plumes that might catch, but cannot keep,  
a stain;

And, with cloud-streaks lightest and loftiest,  
share

The sun's first greeting, his last farewell  
ray!

Resplendent Wanderer! followed with  
glad eyes

Where'er her course; mysterious Bird!  
To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,  
Eastern Islanders have given  
A holy name — the Bird of Heaven!  
And even a title higher still,  
The Bird of God! whose blessed will  
She seems performing as she flies

Over the earth and through the skies  
In never-wearied search of Paradise —  
Region that crowns her beauty with the  
name

She bears for us — for us how blest,  
How happy at all seasons, could like aim  
Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight  
On wings that fear no glance of God's pure  
sight,  
No tempest from his breath, their promised  
rest

Seeking with indefatigable quest  
Above a world that deems itself most wise  
When most enslaved by gross realities!

### "BY A BLEST HUSBAND GUIDED, MARY CAME"

1835. 1835

This lady was named Carleton; she, along with a sister, was brought up in the neighbourhood of Ambleside. The epitaph, a part of it at least, is in the church at Bromsgrove, where she resided after her marriage.

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came  
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new  
name;

She came, though meek of soul, in seemly  
pride

Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.  
O dread reverse! if aught *be* so, which  
proves

That God will chasten whom he dearly  
loves.

Faith bore her up through pains in mercy  
given,

And troubles that were each a step to  
Heaven:

Two Babes were laid in earth before she  
died;

A third now slumbers at the Mother's  
side;

Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles afford  
A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.

Reader! if to thy bosom cling the pain  
Of recent sorrow combated in vain;  
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to  
thwart

Time still intent on his insidious part,  
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts  
asleep,

Pilfering regrets we would, but cannot,  
keep;

Bear with Him — judge *Him* gently who  
 makes known  
 His bitter loss by this memorial Stone;  
 And pray that in his faithful breast the  
 grace  
 Of resignation find a hallowed place.

## SONNETS

## I

1835 (?). 1835

DESPONDING Father! mark this altered  
 bough,  
 So beautiful of late, with sunshine warmed,  
 Or moist with dews; what more unsightly  
 now,  
 Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit, if  
 formed,  
 Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow  
 Knits not o'er that discolouring and decay  
 As false to expectation. Nor fret thou  
 At like unlovely process in the May  
 Of human life: a Stripling's graces blow,  
 Fade and are shed, that from their timely  
 fall  
 (Misdeem it not a cankerous change) may  
 grow  
 Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks shall  
 call:  
 In all men, sinful is it to be slow  
 To hope — in Parents, sinful above all.

## II

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT  
 BISHOPSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE

1835 (?). 1835

My attention to these antiquities was directed  
 by Mr. Walker, son to the itinerant Eidouranian  
 Philosopher. The beautiful pavement was dis-  
 covered within a few yards of the front door of  
 his parsonage, and appeared from the site (in  
 full view of several hills upon which there had  
 formerly been Roman encampments) as if it  
 might have been the villa of the commander of  
 the forces, at least such was Mr. Walker's con-  
 jecture.

WHILE poring Antiquarians search the  
 ground  
 Upturned with curious pains, the Bard, a  
 Seer,  
 Takes fire: — The men that have been re-  
 appear;

Romans for travel girt, for business gowned;  
 And some recline on couches, myrtle-  
 crowned,  
 In festal glee: why not? For fresh and  
 clear,  
 As if its hues were of the passing year,  
 Dawns this time-buried pavement. From  
 that mound  
 Hoards may come forth of Trajans, Maxi-  
 mins,  
 Shrunk into coins with all their warlike  
 toil:  
 Or a fierce impress issues with its foil  
 Of tenderness — the Wolf, whose suckling  
 Twins  
 The unlettered ploughboy pities when he  
 wins  
 The casual treasure from the furrowed soil.

## III

## ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY

1835 (?). 1835

Written on a journey from Brinsop Court,  
 Herefordshire.

WHEN human touch (as monkish books  
 attest)  
 Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury  
 bells  
 Broke forth in concert flung adown the  
 dells,  
 And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy  
 crest;  
 Sweet tones, and caught by a noble Lady  
 blest  
 To rapture! Mabel listened at the side  
 Of her loved mistress: soon the music died,  
 And Catherine said, *Here I set up my rest.*  
 Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long  
 had sought  
 A home that by such miracle of sound  
 Must be revealed: — she heard it now, or  
 felt  
 The deep, deep joy of a confiding thought;  
 And there, a saintly Anchoress, she dwelt  
 Till she exchanged for heaven that happy  
 ground.

## IV

1835 (?). 1835

In the month of January, when Dora and I  
 were walking from Town-end, Grasmere, across  
 the vale, snow being on the ground, she espied,



in the thick though leafless hedge, a bird's nest half filled with snow. Out of this comfortless appearance arose this Sonnet, which was, in fact, written without the least reference to any individual object, but merely to prove to myself that I could, if I thought fit, write in a strain that Poets have been fond of. On the 14th of February in the same year, my daughter, in a sportive mood, sent it as a Valentine, under a fictitious name, to her cousin C. W.

WHY art thou silent ! Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
Of absence withers what was once so fair ?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant ?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant —

Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant  
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

Speak — though this soft warm heart, once free to hold

A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,

Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow  
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine —

Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know !

## V

1835(?). 1835

Suggested on the road between Preston and Lancaster where it first gives a view of the Lake country, and composed on the same day, on the roof of the coach.

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein  
Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath a sky

As void of sunshine, when, from that wide plain,

Clear tops of far-off mountains we descry,  
Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain,  
All light and lustre. Did no heart reply ?  
Yes, there was One ; — for One, asunder fly  
The thousand links of that ethereal chain ;  
And green vales open out, with grove and field,

And the fair front of many a happy Home ;  
Such tempting spots as into vision come  
While Soldiers, weary of the arms they wield  
And sick at heart of strifeless Christendom,  
Gaze on the moon by parting clouds revealed.

## VI

TO —

1835(?). 1835

The fate of this poor Dove, as described, was told to me at Brinsop Court, by the young lady to whom I have given the name of Lesbia.

"Miss not the occasion : by the forelock take  
That subtle Power, the never-halting Time,  
Lest a mere moment's putting-off should make  
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime."

"WAIT, prithee, wait !" this answer Lesbia threw

Forth to her Dove, and took no further heed ;

Her eye was busy, while her fingers flew  
Across the harp, with soul-engrossing speed ;  
But from that bondage when her thoughts were freed

She rose, and toward the close-shut casement drew,

Whence the poor unregarded Favourite, true  
To old affections, had been heard to plead  
With flapping wing for entrance. What a shriek !

Forced from that voice so lately tuned to a strain

Of harmony ! — a shriek of terror, pain,  
And self-reproach ! for, from aloft, a Kite  
Pounced, — and the Dove, which from its ruthless beak

She could not rescue, perished in her sight !

## VII

1835(?). 1835

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,  
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council met,

Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,  
"The frost of England's pride will soon be thawed ;

Hooded the open brow that overawed  
Our schemes ; the faith and honour, never yet

By us with hope encountered, be upset ; —  
For once I burst my bands, and cry, applaud !"

Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying out !"

They heard, and, starting up, the Brood of Night

Clapped hands, and shook with glee their matted locks ;

All Powers and Places that abhor the light

Joined in the transport, echoed back their  
shout,  
Hurrah for —, hugging his Ballot-box !

NOVEMBER 1836

1836. 1837

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified  
The sway of Death; long ere mine eyes had  
seen  
Thy countenance — the still rapture of thy  
mien —  
When thou, dear Sister ! wert become  
Death's Bride:  
No trace of pain or languor could abide  
That change: — age on thy brow was  
smoothed — thy cold  
Wan cheek at once was privileged to unfold  
A loveliness to living youth denied.  
Oh ! if within me hope should e'er decline,

The lamp of faith, lost Friend ! too faintly  
burn;  
Then may that heaven-revealing smile of  
thine,  
The bright assurance, visibly return:  
And let my spirit in that power divine  
Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased  
to mourn.

“SIX MONTHS TO SIX YEARS  
ADDED HE REMAINED”

1836. 1836

Six months to six years added he remained  
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained:  
O blessed Lord ! whose mercy then removed  
A Child whom every eye that looked on  
loved;  
Support us, teach us calmly to resign  
What we possessed, and now is wholly thine !

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

1837-42. 1842

During my whole life I had felt a strong desire to visit Rome and the other celebrated cities and regions of Italy, but did not think myself justified in incurring the necessary expense till I received from Mr. Moxon, the publisher of a large edition of my poems, a sum sufficient to enable me to gratify my wish without encroaching upon what I considered due to my family. My excellent friend H. C. Robinson readily consented to accompany me, and in March 1837, we set off from London, to which we returned in August, earlier than my companion wished or I should myself have desired had I been, like him, a bachelor. These Memorials of that tour touch upon but a very few of the places and objects that interested me, and, in what they do advert to, are for the most part much slighter than I could wish. More particularly do I regret that there is no notice in them of the South of France, nor of the Roman antiquities abounding in that district, especially of the Pont de Degard, which, together with its situation, impressed me full as much as any remains of Roman architecture to be found in Italy. Then there was Vaucluse, with its Fountain, its Petrarch, its rocks of all seasons, its small plots of lawn in their first vernal freshness, and the blossoms of the peach and other trees embellishing the scene on every side. The beauty of the stream also called forcibly for the expression of sympathy from one who from his childhood had studied the brooks and torrents of his native mountains. Between two and three hours did I run about climbing the steep and rugged crags from whose base the water of Vaucluse breaks forth. “Has Laura's Lover,” often said I to myself, “ever sat down upon this stone ? or has his foot ever pressed that turf ?” Some, especially of the female sex, would have felt sure of it: my answer was (impute it to my years), “I fear not.” Is it not in fact obvious that many of his love verses must have flowed, I do not say from a wish to display his own talent, but from a habit of exercising his intellect in that way rather than from an impulse of his heart ? It is otherwise with his Lyrical poems, and particularly with the one upon the degradation of his country : there he pours out his reproaches, lamentations, and aspirations like an ardent and sincere patriot. But enough : it is time to turn to my own effusions, such as they are.

TO

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

COMPANION ! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,  
In whose experience trusting, day by day  
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared  
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,

These records take, and happy should I be  
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee  
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,  
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe  
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, Feb 14th, 1842.

The Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

## I

## MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE

APRIL 1837. 1842

"Not the less  
Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words  
That spake of bards and minstrels."

His, Sir Walter Scott's eye, *did* in fact kindle at them, for the lines, "Places forsaken now," and the two that follow were adopted from a poem of mine which nearly forty years ago was in part read to him, and he never forgot them.

"Old Helvellyn's brow,  
Where once together, in his day of strength,  
We stood rejoicing."

Sir Humphrey Davy was with us at the time. We had ascended from Paterdale, and I could not but admire the vigour with which Scott scrambled along that horn of the mountain called "Striding Edge." Our progress was necessarily slow, and was beguiled by Scott's telling many stories and amusing anecdotes, as was his custom. Sir H. Davy would have probably been better pleased if other topics had occasionally been interspersed, and some discussion entered upon: at all events he did not remain with us long at the top of the mountain, but left us to find our way down its steep side together into the vale of Grasmere, where, at my cottage, Mrs. Scott was to meet us at dinner.

"With faint smile  
He said, — 'When I am there, although 't is fair,  
'T will be another Yarrow.'"

See among these notes the one on "Yarrow Revisited."

"A few short steps (painful they were)."

This, though introduced here, I did not know till it was told me at Rome by Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, a lady whose friendly attentions

during my residence at Rome I have gratefully acknowledged, with expressions of sincere regret that she is no more. Miss M. told me that she accompanied Sir Walter to the Janicular Mount, and, after showing him the grave of Tasso in the church upon the top, and a mural monument there erected to his memory, they left the church and stood together on the brow of the hill overlooking the city of Rome: his daughter Anne was with them, and she, naturally desirous, for the sake of Miss Mackenzie especially, to have some expression of pleasure from her father, half reproached him for showing nothing of that kind either by his looks or voice: "How can I," replied he, "having only one leg to stand upon, and that in extreme pain!" so that the prophecy was more than fulfilled.

"Over waves rough and deep."

We took boat near the lighthouse at the point of the right horn of the bay which makes a sort of natural port for Genoa; but the wind was high, and the waves long and rough, so that I did not feel quite recompensed by the view of the city, splendid as it was, for the danger apparently incurred. The boatman (I had only one) encouraged me, saying we were quite safe, but I was not a little glad when we gained the shore, though Shelley and Byron — one of them at least, who seemed to have courted agitation from any quarter — would have probably rejoiced in such a situation: more than once I believe were they both in extreme danger even on the Lake of Geneva. Every man however has his fears of some kind or other; and no doubt they had theirs: of all men whom I have ever known, Coleridge had the most of passive courage in bodily peril, but no one was so easily cowed when moral firmness was required in miscellaneous conversation or in the daily intercourse of social life.

"How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade,  
Each ministering to each, didst thou appear,  
Savona."

There is not a single bay along this beautiful coast that might not raise in a traveller a wish to take up his abode there, each as it succeeds seems more inviting than the other; but the desolated convent on the cliff in the bay of Savona struck my fancy most; and had I, for the sake of my own health or that of a dear friend, or any other cause, been desirous of a residence abroad, I should have let my thoughts loose upon a scheme of turning some part of this building into a habitation provided as far as might be with English comforts. There is close by it a row or avenue, I forget which, of

tall cypresses. I could not forbear saying to myself — "What a sweet family walk, or one for lonely musings, would be found under the shade!" but there, probably, the trees remained little noticed and seldom enjoyed.

"This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood."

The broom is a great ornament through the months of March and April to the vales and hills of the Apennines, in the wild parts of which it blows in the utmost profusion, and of course successively at different elevations as the season advances. It surpasses ours in beauty and fragrance, but, speaking from my own limited observation only, I cannot affirm the same of several of their wild spring flowers, the primroses in particular, which I saw not unfrequently but thinly scattered and languishing compared to ours.

The note at the close of this poem, upon the Oxford movement, was intrusted to my friend Mr. Fredrick Faber. I told him what I wished to be said, and begged that, as he was intimately acquainted with several of the Leaders of it, he would express my thought in the way least likely to be taken amiss by them. Much of the work they are undertaking was grievously wanted, and God grant their endeavours may continue to prosper as they have done.

YE Apennines! with all your fertile vales  
Deeply embosomed, and your winding shores  
Of either sea — an Islander by birth,  
A Mountaineer by habit, would resound  
Your praise, in meet accordance with your  
claims

Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great  
deeds

Inherited: — presumptuous thought! — it  
fled

Like vapour, like a towering cloud, dis-  
solved.

Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to  
sadness; —

You snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down it  
drops <sup>10</sup>

Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,  
Lulling the leisure of that high perched  
town,

AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site  
Its neighbour and its namesake — town, and  
flood

Forth flashing out of its own gloomy chasm  
Bright sunbeams — the fresh verdure of  
this lawn

Strewn with grey rocks, and on the horizon's  
verge,

O'er intervenient waste, through glimmer-  
ing haze,  
Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped  
hill

With fractured summit, no indifferent sight  
To travellers, from such comforts as are  
thine, <sup>21</sup>

Bleak Radicofani! escaped with joy —  
These are before me; and the varied scene  
May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry heat  
Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind

Passive yet pleased. What! with this  
Broom in flower

Close at my side! She bids me fly to greet  
Her sisters, soon like her to be attired  
With golden blossoms opening at the feet  
Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting  
given, <sup>30</sup>

Given with a voice and by a look returned  
Of old companionship, Time counts not  
minutes

Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,  
The local Genius hurries me aloft,  
Transported over that cloud-wooing hill,  
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,  
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's  
top,

There to alight upon crisp moss and range,  
Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,  
Of visual sovereignty — hills multitudinous,  
(Not Apennine can boast of fairer) hills <sup>41</sup>

Pride of two nations, wood and lake and  
plains,

And prospect right below of deep coves  
shaped

By skeleton arms, that, from the moun-  
tain's trunk

Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual  
moan

Struggling for liberty, while undismayed  
The shepherd struggles with them. On-  
ward thence

And downward by the skirt of Greenside  
fell,

And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glen-  
coign,

Places forsaken now, though loving still <sup>50</sup>  
The muses, as they loved them in the days  
Of the old minstrels and the border bards. —  
But here am I fast bound; and let it pass,

The simple rapture; — who that travels far  
To feed his mind with watchful eyes could  
share

Or wish to share it? — One there surely  
was,

"The Wizard of the North," with anxious  
     hope  
 Brought to this genial climate, when dis-  
     ease  
 Preyed upon body and mind — yet not the  
     less  
 Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear  
     words<sup>60</sup>  
 That spake of bards and minstrels; and  
     his spirit  
 Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's  
     brow,  
 Where once together, in his day of strength,  
 We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free  
 From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.  
 Years followed years, and when, upon  
     the eve  
 Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought  
     turned,  
 Or by another's sympathy was led,  
 To this bright land, Hope was for him no  
     friend,  
 Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped<sup>70</sup>  
 No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep  
     seats,  
 Survives for me, and cannot but survive  
 The tone of voice which wedded borrowed  
     words  
 To sadness not their own, when, with  
     faint smile  
 Forced by intent to take from speech its  
     edge,  
 He said, "When I am there, although 't is  
     fair,  
 'T will be another Yarrow." Prophecy  
 More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's  
     shores  
 Soon witnessed, and the city of seven hills,  
 Her sparkling fountains and her mouldering  
     tombs;<sup>80</sup>  
 And more than all, that Eminence which  
     showed  
 Her splendours, seen, not felt, the while  
     he stood  
 A few short steps (painful they were) apart  
 From Tasso's Convent-haven, and retired  
     grave.  
 Peace to their Spirits! why should Poesy  
 Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover  
 In gloom on wings with confidence out-  
     spread  
 To move in sunshine? — Utter thanks, my  
     Soul!  
 Tempered with awe, and sweetened by  
     compassion

For them who in the shades of sorrow  
     dwell,  
 That I — so near the term to human life<sup>90</sup>  
 Appointed by man's common heritage,  
 Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that  
 Deserve a thought) but little known to  
     fame —  
 Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest  
     looks,  
 Art's noblest relics, history's rich bequests,  
 Failed to reanimate and but feebly cheered  
 The whole world's Darling — free to rove  
     at will  
 O'er high and low, and if requiring rest,  
 Rest from enjoyment only.  
     Thanks poured forth  
 For what thus far hath blessed my wander-  
     ings, thanks<sup>101</sup>  
 Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe  
 Where gladness seems a duty — let me  
     guard  
 Those seeds of expectation which the fruit  
 Already gathered in this favoured Land  
 Enfolds within its core. The faith be  
     mine,  
 That He who guides and governs all, ap-  
     proves  
 When gratitude, though disciplined to look  
 Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear  
     a crown  
 Of earthly hope put on with trembling  
     hand;<sup>110</sup>  
 Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden  
     beams,  
 Reflected through the mists of age, from  
     hours  
 Of innocent delight, remote or recent,  
 Shoot but a little way — 't is all they can —  
 Into the doubtful future. Who would keep  
 Power must resolve to cleave to it through  
     life,  
 Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.  
 Saints would not grieve nor guardian angels  
     frown  
 If one — while tossed, as was my lot to be,  
 In a frail bark urged by two slender oars<sup>120</sup>  
 Over waves rough and deep, that, when  
     they broke,  
 Dashed their white foam against the palace  
     walls  
 Of Genoa the superb — should there be led  
 To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,  
 However humble in themselves, with  
     thoughts  
 Raised and sustained by memory of Him

Who oftentimes within those narrow bounds  
Rocked on the surge, there tried his spirit's  
strength

And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his  
ship

To lay a new world open.

Nor less prized  
Be those impressions which incline the  
heart <sup>131</sup>

To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,  
Bend that way her desires. The dew, the  
storm —

The dew whose moisture fell in gentle  
drops

On the small hyssop destined to become,  
By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,  
A purifying instrument -- the storm  
That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top,  
And as it shook, enabling the blind roots  
Further to force their way, endowed its  
trunk <sup>140</sup>

With magnitude and strength fit to uphold  
The glorious temple -- did alike proceed  
From the same gracious will, were both an  
offspring

Of bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim  
Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled  
By no profane ambition, Powers that thrive  
By conflict, and their opposites, that trust  
In lowliness -- a midway tract there lies  
Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind  
Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-aged,  
and Old, <sup>150</sup>

From century on to century, must have  
known

The emotion -- nay, more fitly were it said --  
The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep  
Into my spirit, when I paced, enclosed  
In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor  
Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,  
And through each window's open fretwork  
looked

O'er the blank Area of sacred earth  
Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply  
delved

In precincts nearer to the Saviour's tomb, <sup>160</sup>  
By hands of men, humble as brave, who  
fought

For its deliverance -- a capacious field  
That to descendants of the dead it holds  
And to all living mute memento breathes,  
More touching far than aught which on the  
walls

Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,

Of the changed City's long-departed power,  
Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they  
are,

Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.

And, high above that length of cloistral  
roof, <sup>170</sup>

Peering in air and backed by azure sky,  
To kindred contemplations ministers

The Baptistery's dome, and that which  
swells

From the Cathedral pile; and with the  
twain

Conjoined in prospect mutable or fixed

(As hurry on in eagerness the feet,  
Or pause) the summit of the Leaning-  
tower.

Nor less remuneration waits on him

Who having left the Cemetery stands

In the Tower's shadow, of decline and fall  
Admonished not without some sense of  
fear, <sup>181</sup>

Fear that soon vanishes before the sight  
Of splendour unextinguished, pomp un-  
scathed,

And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,  
And for itself, the assemblage, grand and  
fair

To view, and for the mind's consenting eye

A type of age in man, upon its front

Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence

Of past exploits, nor fondly after more

Struggling against the stream of destiny, <sup>190</sup>

But with its peaceful majesty content.

— Oh what a spectacle at every turn

The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned  
with moss

Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest  
foot

Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;  
Where Solitude with Silence paired stops  
short

Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe

Decay submits not.

But where'er my steps

Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with care

Those images of genial beauty, oft

Too lovely to be pensive in themselves

But by reflection made so, which do best

And fittest serve to crown with fragrant  
wreaths

Life's cup when almost filled with years,  
like mine.

— How lovely robed in forenoon light and  
shade,

Each ministering to each, didst thou appear

Savona, Queen of territory fair  
 As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its  
     length  
 Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance  
     holds  
 As a selected treasure thy one cliff, 210  
 That, while it wore for melancholy crest  
 A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have  
 Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs  
 And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave  
     proof how kind  
 The breath of air can be where earth had  
     else  
 Seemed churlish. And behold, both far  
     and near,  
 Garden and field all decked with orange  
     bloom,  
 And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest  
     breeze  
 Expanding; and, along the smooth shore  
     curved  
 Into a natural port, a tideless sea, 220  
 To that mild breeze with motion and with  
     voice  
 Softly responsive; and, attuned to all  
 Those vernal charms of sight and sound,  
     appeared  
 Smooth space of turf which from the guard-  
     ian fort  
 Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April  
     green,  
 In coolest climes too fugitive, might even  
     here  
 Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer  
     stay  
 Than his unmitigated beams allow,  
 Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve,  
 From mortal change, aught that is born on  
     earth 230  
 Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink  
 Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,  
 Modest Savona! over all did brood  
 A pure poetic Spirit — as the breeze,  
 Mild — as the verdure, fresh — the sun-  
     shine, bright —  
 Thy gentle Chiabrera! — not a stone,  
 Mural or level with the trodden floor,  
 In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest  
 Missed not the truth, retains a single name  
 Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,  
 To whose dear memories his sepulchral  
     verse 241  
 Paid simple tribute, such as might have  
     flowed

From the clear spring of a plain English  
     heart,  
 Say rather, one in native fellowship  
 With all who want not skill to couple grief  
 With praise, as genuine admiration prompts.  
 The grief, the praise, are severed from their  
     dust,  
 Yet in his page the records of that worth  
 Survive, uninjured; — glory then to words,  
 Honour to word-preserving Arts, and hail  
 Ye kindred local influences that still, 251  
 If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,  
 Await my steps when they the breezy height  
 Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;  
 On Sabine vales explored inspire a wish  
 To meet the shade of Horace by the side  
 Of his Bandusian fount; or I invoke  
 His presence to point out the spot where  
     once  
 He sate, and eulogized with earnest pen  
 Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate desires;  
 And all the immunities of rural life 261  
 Extolled, behind Vacuina's crumbling fane.  
 Or let me loiter, soothed with what is  
     given  
 Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,  
 Parthenope's Domain — Virgilian haunt,  
 Illustrated with never-dying verse,  
 And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,  
 Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands  
 Endeared.

And who — if not a man as cold  
 In heart as dull in brain — while pacing  
     ground 270  
 Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, high  
     minds  
 Out of her early struggles well inspired  
 To localize heroic acts — could look  
 Upon the spots with undelighted eye,  
 Though even to their last syllable the  
     Lays  
 And very names of those who gave them  
     birth  
 Have perished? — Verily, to her utmost  
     depth,  
 Imagination feels what Reason fears not  
 To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged  
 In those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned  
 To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race, 281  
 And others like in fame, created Powers  
 With attributes from History derived,  
 By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,  
 Through marvellous felicity of skill,  
 With something more propitious to high  
     aims

Than either, pent within her separate  
sphere,  
Can oft with justice claim.

And not disdaining  
Union with those primeval energies  
To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your  
height <sup>210</sup>

Christian Traditions ! at my Spirit's call  
Descend, and, on the brow of ancient Rome  
As she survives in ruin, manifest  
Your glories mingled with the brightest  
hues

Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,  
But never to be extinct while Earth endures.  
O come, if undishonoured by the prayer,  
From all her Sanctuaries ! — Open for my  
feet

Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse  
Of the Devout, as, 'mid your glooms con-  
vened <sup>300</sup>

For safety, they of yore enclasped the  
Cross

On knees that ceased from trembling, or  
intoned

Their orisons with voices half-suppressed,  
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be  
heard,  
Even at this hour.

And thou Mamertine prison,  
Into that vault receive me from whose  
depth

Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,  
Albeit lifting human to divine,  
A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic  
Keys

Grasped in his hand; and lo ! with upright  
sword <sup>310</sup>

Prefiguring his own impending doom,  
The Apostle of the Gentiles; both prepared  
To suffer pains with heathen scorn and  
hate

Inflicted; — blessed Men, for so to Heaven  
They follow their dear Lord !

'Time flows — nor winds,  
Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,  
But many a benefit borne upon his breast  
For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,  
No one knows how; nor seldom is put forth  
An angry arm that snatches good away, <sup>320</sup>  
Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream  
Has to our generation brought and brings  
Innumerable gains; yet we, who now  
Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely  
To a chilled age, most pitifully shut out  
From that which is and actuates, by forms,

Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact  
Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,  
Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,  
By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed  
Science, wide-spread and spreading still as  
be <sup>331</sup>

Her conquests, in the world of sense made  
known,

So with the internal mind it fares; and so  
With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear  
Of vital principle's controlling law,  
To her purblind guide Expediency; and so  
Suffers religious faith. Elate with view  
Of what is won, we overlook or scorn  
The best that should keep pace with it, and  
must,

Else more and more the general mind will  
droop, <sup>340</sup>

Even as if bent on perishing. There lives  
No faculty within us which the Soul  
Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal de-  
mands,

For dignity not placed beyond her reach,  
Zealous co-operation of all means  
Given or acquired, to raise us from the  
mire,

And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.  
By gross Utilities enslaved, we need

More of ennobling impulse from the past,  
If to the future aught of good must come  
Sonder and therefore holier than the ends  
Which, in the giddiness of self-applause, <sup>352</sup>  
We covet as supreme. O grant the crown  
That Wisdom wears, or take his treacher-  
ous staff

From Knowledge ! — If the Muse, whom I  
have served

This day, be mistress of a single pearl  
Fit to be placed in that pure diadem;  
Then, not in vain, under these chestnut  
boughs

Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul  
To transports from the secondary founts  
Flowing of time and place, and paid to  
both <sup>361</sup>

Due homage: nor shall fruitlessly have  
striven,

By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in  
verse

Accordant meditations, which in times  
Vexed and disordered, as our own, may  
shed

Influence, at least among a scattered few,  
To soberness of mind and peace of heart  
Friendly; as here to my repose hath been



This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood,  
the light  
And murmur issuing from yon pendent  
flood,  
And all the varied landscape. Let us now <sup>370</sup>  
Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent  
Rome.

## II

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO  
AT ROME

1837. 1842

Sir George Beaumont told me that, when he first visited Italy, pine-trees of this species abounded, but that on his return thither, which was more than thirty years after, they had disappeared from many places where he had been accustomed to admire them, and had become rare all over the country, especially in and about Rome. Several Roman villas have within these few years passed into the hands of foreigners, who, I observed with pleasure, have taken care to plant this tree, which in course of years will become a great ornament to the city and to the general landscape. May I venture to add here, that having ascended the Monte Mario, I could not resist embracing the trunk of this interesting monument of my departed friend's feelings for the beauties of nature, and the power of that art which he loved so much, and in the practice of which he was so distinguished.

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine  
Look like a cloud — a slender stem the tie  
That bound it to its native earth — poised  
high  
'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,  
Striving in peace each other to outshine.  
But when I learned the Tree was living  
there,  
Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's  
care,  
Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine !  
The rescued Pine-Tree, with its sky so  
bright  
And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of  
home,  
Death-parted friends, and days too swift in  
flight,  
Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome  
(Then first apparent from the Pincian  
Height)  
Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.

## III

## AT ROME

1837. 1842

Sight is at first a sad enemy to imagination and to those pleasures belonging to old times with which some exertions of that power will always mingle: nothing perhaps brings this truth home to the feelings more than the city of Rome; not so much in respect to the impression made at the moment when it is first seen and looked at as a whole, for then the imagination may be invigorated and the mind's eye quickened; but when particular spots or objects are sought out, disappointment is I believe invariably felt. Ability to recover from this disappointment will exist in proportion to knowledge, and the power of the mind to reconstruct out of fragments and parts, and to make details in the present subservient to more adequate comprehension of the past.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitoline Hill ?  
Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,  
Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still  
That name, a local Phantom proud to mock  
The Traveller's expectation ? — Could our  
Will

Destroy the ideal Power within, 't were done  
Thro' what men see and touch, — slaves  
wandering on,

Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught  
skill.

Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh;  
Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn,  
From that depression raised, to mount on  
high

With stronger wing, more clearly to discern  
Eternal things; and, if need be, defy  
Change, with a brow not insolent, though  
stern.

## IV

AT ROME — REGRETS — IN AL-  
LUSION TO NIEBUHR AND  
OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS

1837. 1842

THOSE old credulities, to nature dear,  
Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock  
Of History, stript naked as a rock  
'Mid a dry desert ? What is it we hear ?  
The glory of Infant Rome must disappear,  
Her morning splendours vanish, and their  
place

Know them no more. If Truth, who veiled  
her face  
With those bright beams yet hid it not,  
must steer  
Henceforth a humbler course perplexed and  
slow;  
One solace yet remains for us who came  
Into this world in days when story lacked  
Severe research, that in our hearts we know  
How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,  
Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

## V

## CONTINUED

1837-42. 1842

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the  
same  
Involved a history of no doubtful sense,  
History that proves by inward evidence  
From what a precious source of truth it  
came.  
Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have dared  
Such deeds to paint, such characters to  
frame,  
But for coeval sympathy prepared  
To greet with instant faith their loftiest  
claim.  
None but a noble people could have loved  
Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded  
style:  
Not in like sort the Runic Scald was moved;  
He, nursed 'mid savage passions that de-  
file  
Humanity, sang feats that well might call  
For the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's riot-  
ous Hall.

## VI

## PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN

1837-42. 1842

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,  
Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,  
Who, gathering up all that Time's envious  
tooth  
Has spared of sound and grave realities,  
Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,  
Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,  
That might have drawn down Clio from the  
skies  
To vindicate the majesty of truth.

Such was her office while she walked with  
men,  
A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire  
All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might  
be,  
Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,  
And taught her faithful servants how the  
lyre  
Should animate, but not mislead, the pen.

## VII

## AT ROME

1837-42. 1842

I have a private interest in this Sonnet, for  
I doubt whether it would ever have been writ-  
ten but for the lively picture given me by  
Anna Ricketts of what they had witnessed of  
the indignation and sorrow expressed by some  
Italian noblemen of their acquaintance upon  
the surrender, which circumstances had obliged  
them to make of the best portion of their fam-  
ily mansions to strangers.

THEY — who have seen the noble Roman's  
scorn  
Break forth at thought of laying down his  
head,  
When the blank day is over, garreted  
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn  
To night, the desecrated floors are worn  
By feet of purse-proud strangers; they —  
who have read  
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,  
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne;  
They — who have heard some learned  
Patriot treat  
Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole  
theme  
From ancient Rome, downwards through  
that bright dream  
Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat  
Of rival glory; they — fallen Italy —  
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of  
Thee!

## VIII

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST.  
PETER'S

1837-42. 1842

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and  
lawn:  
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon

Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;  
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn  
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant  
fawn,

Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,  
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,  
Startling and shrill as that which roused the  
dawn.

— Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the  
nerve

Shrinks from the note as from a mistimed  
thing,

Oft for a holy warning may it serve,  
Charged with remembrance of *his* sudden  
sting,

His bitter tears, whose name the Papal  
Chair

And you resplendent Church are proud to  
bear.

## IX

## AT ALBANO

1837-42. 1842

This Sonnet is founded on simple fact, and was written to enlarge, if possible, the views of those who can see nothing but evil in the intercessions countenanced by the Church of Rome. That they are in many respects lamentably pernicious must be acknowledged; but, on the other hand, they who reflect, while they see and observe, cannot but be struck with instances which will prove that it is a great error to condemn in all cases such mediation as purely idolatrous. This remark bears with especial force upon addresses to the Virgin.

DAYS passed — and Monte Calvo would not  
clear

His head from mist; and, as the wind  
sobbed through

Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,  
My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear  
Found casual vent. She said, "Be of  
good cheer;

Our yesterday's procession did not sue  
In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,  
Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to  
hear,

But not in scorn: — the Matron's Faith may  
lack

The heavenly sanction needed to ensure  
Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track  
Stops not at this low point, nor wants the  
lure

Of flowers the Virgin without fear may  
own,  
For by her Son's blest hand the seed was  
sown.

## X

1837-42. 1842

NEAR Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove  
Perched on an olive branch, and heard her  
cooing

'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were  
wooing,  
While all things present told of joy and  
love.

But restless Fancy left that olive grove  
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing  
Hope for the few, who, at the world's un-  
doing,

On the great flood were spared to live and  
move.

O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove  
and bough

Brought to the ark are coming evermore,  
Given though we seek them not, but, while  
we plough

This sea of life without a visible shore,  
Do neither promise ask nor grace implore  
In what alone is ours, the living Now.

## XI

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS,  
LOOKING TOWARDS ROME

1837-42. 1842

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep  
sighs,

Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills  
bestrown

With monuments decayed or overthrown,  
For all that tottering stands or prostrate  
lies,

Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,  
Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;  
Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her  
gaudy crown;

Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.  
Yet why prolong this mournful strain? —  
Fallen Power,

Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke  
Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour  
When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy double  
yoke,

And enter, with prompt aid from the Most  
High,  
On the third stage of thy great destiny.

## XII

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASY-  
MENE

1837-42. 1842

WHEN here with Carthage Rome to conflict  
came,  
An earthquake, mingling with the battle's  
shock,  
Checked not its rage; unfelt the ground  
did rock,  
Sword dropped not, javelin kept its deadly  
aim. —  
Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that day's  
shame,  
Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,  
Save in this Rill that took from blood the  
name  
Which yet it bears, sweet Stream! as  
crystal pure.  
So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof  
From the true guidance of humanity,  
Thro' Time and Nature's influence, purify  
Their spirit; or, unless they for reproof  
Or warning serve, thus let them all, on  
ground  
That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

## XIII

## NEAR THE SAME LAKE

1837-42. 1842

FOR action born, existing to be tried,  
Powers manifold we have that intervene  
To stir the heart that would too closely  
screen  
Her peace from images to pain allied.  
What wonder if at midnight, by the side  
Of Sanguinetto, or broad Thrasydene,  
The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms  
glide,  
Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight seen;  
And singly thine, O vanquished Chief!  
whose corse,  
Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain:  
But who is He? — the Conqueror. Would  
he force

His way to Rome? Ah, no, — round hill  
and plain  
Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong  
command,  
This spot — his shadowy death-cup in his  
hand.

## XIV

## THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA

MAY 25, 1837

1837. 1842

Among a thousand delightful feelings con-  
nected in my mind with the voice of the cuckoo,  
there is a personal one which is rather mel-  
ancholy. I was first convinced that age had  
rather dulled my hearing, by not being able to  
catch the sound at the same distance as the  
younger companions of my walks; and of this  
failure I had a proof upon the occasion that  
suggested these verses. I did not hear the  
sound till Mr. Robinson had twice or thrice  
directed my attention to it.

LIST — 't was the Cuckoo. — O with what  
delight  
Heard I that voice! and catch it now, though  
faint,  
Far off and faint, and melting into air,  
Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again!  
Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,  
Although invisible as Echo's self,  
Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy  
Creature,  
For this unthought-of greeting!

While allured  
From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,  
We have pursued, through various lands,  
a long  
And pleasant course; flower after flower  
has blown,  
Embellishing the ground that gave them  
birth  
With aspects novel to my sight; but still  
Most fair, most welcome, when they drank  
the dew  
In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,  
For old remembrance sake. And oft —  
where Spring  
Displayed her richest blossoms among files  
Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing  
fruit  
Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade  
Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,  
The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy —

Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush

Blending as in a common English grove  
Their love-songs; but, where'er my feet  
might roam,

Whate'er assemblages of new and old,  
Strange and familiar, might beguile the  
way,

A gratulation from that vagrant Voice  
Was wanting, — and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna! mark the far-famed  
Pile,

High on the brink of that precipitous rock,  
Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth  
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned  
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,  
By a few Monks, a stern society,  
Dead to the world and scorning earth-born  
joys.

Nay — though the hopes that drew, the  
fears that drove,

St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide  
Among these sterile heights of Apennine,  
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House,  
have ceased

To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules  
Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live;  
His milder Genius (thanks to the good God  
That made us) over those severe restraints  
Of mind, that dread heart-freezing disci-  
pline,

Doth sometimes here predominate, and  
works

By unsought means for gracious purposes;  
For earth through heaven, for heaven, by  
changeable earth,

Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power  
of sense,

Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart  
Of that once sinful Being overflowed  
On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,  
And every shape of creature they sustain,  
Divine affections; and with beast and bird  
(Stilled from afar — such marvel story  
tells —

By casual outbreak of his passionate words,  
And from their own pursuits in field or  
grove

Drawn to his side by look or act of love  
Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)  
He wont to hold companionship so free,  
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and  
delight,

As to be likened in his Followers' minds

To that which our first Parents, ere the  
fall

From their high state darkened the Earth  
with fear,  
Held with all kinds in Eden's blissful  
bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere  
Band,

Who breathe the air he breathed, tread  
where he trod,

Some true Partakers of his loving spirit  
Do still survive, and, with those gentle  
hearts

Consorted, Others, in the power, the faith,  
Of a baptized imagination, prompt  
To catch from Nature's humblest monitors  
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though  
pale

With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by  
years,

Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,  
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,  
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward raised,  
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore  
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed  
By the joint pressure of his musing mood  
And habit of his vow. That ancient Man —  
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,  
As we approached the Convent gate, aloft  
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,

A young Ascetic — Poet, Hero, Sage,  
He might have been, Lover belike he was —  
If they received into a conscious ear  
The notes whose first faint greeting startled  
me,

Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy  
My heart — may have been moved like me  
to think,

Ah! not like me who walk in the world's  
ways,

On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice of  
One*

*Crying amid the wilderness*, and given,  
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs  
and flowers

Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,  
That awful name to Thee, thee, simple  
Cuckoo,

Wandering in solitude, and evermore  
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave  
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies  
To carry thy glad tidings over heights  
Still loftier, and to climes more near the  
Pole.

Voice of the Desert, fare-thee-well; sweet Bird!  
 If that substantial title please thee more,  
 Farewell! — but go thy way, no need hast thou  
 Of a good wish sent after thee; from bower  
 To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,  
 Thee gentle breezes waft — or airs, that meet  
 Thy course and sport around thee, softly fan —  
 Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,  
 Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,  
 And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

## XV

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMAL-  
DOLI

1837-42. 1842

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came be-  
 reft,  
 And seeking consolation from above;  
 Nor grieve the less that skill to him was  
 left  
 To paint this picture of his lady-love:  
 Can she, a blessed saint, the work approve?  
 And oh, good Brethren of the cowl, a thing  
 So fair, to which with peril he must cling,  
 Destroy in pity, or with care remove.  
 That bloom — those eyes — can they assist  
 to bind  
 Thoughts that would stray from Heaven?  
 The dream must cease  
 To be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must  
 live;  
 Else will the enamoured Monk too surely  
 find  
 How wide a space can part from inward  
 peace  
 The most profound repose his cell can  
 give.

## XVI

## CONTINUED

1837-42. 1842

THE world forsaken, all its busy cares  
 And stirring interests shunned with desper-  
 ate flight,  
 All trust abandoned in the healing might

Of virtuous action; all that courage dares,  
 Labour accomplishes, or patience bears —  
 Those helps rejected, they, whose minds  
 perceive  
 How subtly works man's weakness, sighs  
 may heave  
 For such a One beset with cloistral snares.  
 Father of Mercy! rectify his view,  
 If with his vows this object ill agree;  
 Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue  
 Imperious passion in a heart set free: —  
 That earthly love may to herself be true,  
 Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.

## XVII

AT THE EREMIT OR UPPER  
CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI

1837-42. 1842

WHAT aim had they, the Pair of Monks,  
 in size  
 Enormous, dragged, while side by side  
 they sate,  
 By panting steers up to this convent gate?  
 How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered  
 eyes,  
 Dare they confront the lean austerities  
 Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait  
 In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate  
 Through all that humbles flesh and mortifi-  
 es?  
 Strange contrast! — verily the world of  
 dreams,  
 Where mingle, as for mockery combined,  
 Things in their very essences at strife,  
 Shows not a sight incongruous as the ex-  
 tremes  
 That everywhere, before the thoughtful  
 mind,  
 Meet on the solid ground of waking life.

## XVIII

## AT VALLOMBROSA

1837-42. 1842

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks  
 In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades  
 High over-arch'd embower."

*Paradise Lost.*

I must confess, though of course I did not  
 acknowledge it in the few lines I wrote in the  
 Strangers' book kept at the convent, that I was

somewhat disappointed at Vallombrosa. I had expected, as the name implies, a deep and narrow valley overshadowed by enclosing hills; but the spot where the convent stands is in fact not a valley at all, but a cove or crescent open to an extensive prospect. In the book before mentioned, I read the notice in the English language that if any one would ascend the steep ground above the convent, and wander over it, he would be abundantly rewarded by magnificent views. I had not time to act upon this recommendation, and only went with my young guide to a point, nearly on a level with the site of the convent, that overlooks the vale of Arno for some leagues. To praise great and good men has ever been deemed one of the worthiest employments of poetry, but the objects of admiration vary so much with time and circumstances, and the noblest of mankind have been found, when intimately known, to be of characters so imperfect, that no eulogist can find a subject which he will venture upon with the animation necessary to create sympathy, unless he confines himself to a particular art or he takes something of a one-sided view of the person he is disposed to celebrate. This is a melancholy truth, and affords a strong reason for the poetic mind being chiefly exercised in works of fiction: the poet can then follow wherever the spirit of admiration leads him, unchecked by such suggestions as will be too apt to cross his way if all that he is prompted to utter is to be tested by fact. Something in this spirit I have written in the note attached to the sonnet on the king of Sweden; and many will think that in this poem and elsewhere I have spoken of the author of "Paradise Lost" in a strain of panegyric scarcely justifiable by the tenor of some of his opinions, whether theological or political, and by the temper he carried into public affairs in which, unfortunately for his genius, he was so much concerned.

"VALLOMBROSA — I longed in thy shadiest wood

To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor!"

Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,

That lulled me asleep bids me listen once more.

Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the steep,

Near that Cell — yon sequestered Retreat high in air —

Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep

For converse with God, sought through study and prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with pride,

And its truth who shall doubt? for his Spirit is here;

In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her grandeur abide,

In the pines pointing heavenward her beauty austere;

In the flower-besprent meadows his genius we trace

Turned to humbler delights, in which youth might confide,

That would yield him fit help while prefiguring that Place

Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never had died.

When with life lengthened out came a desolate time,

And darkness and danger had compassed him round,

With a thought he would flee to these haunts of his prime

And here once again a kind shelter be found.

And let me believe that when nightly the Muse

Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill, Here also, on some favoured height, he would choose

To wander, and drink inspiration at will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the page

Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for my mind

Had a musical charm, which the winter of age

And the changes it brings had no power to unbind.

And now, ye Miltonian shades! under you I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy to part,

While your leaves I behold and the brooks they will strew,

And the realised vision is clasped to my heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we may

In Forms that must perish, frail objects of sense;

Unblamed — if the Soul be intent on the day

When the Being of Beings shall summon her hence.

For he and he only with wisdom is blest  
 Who, gathering true pleasures wherever  
     they grow,  
 Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,  
 To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity  
     flow.

40

## XIX

## AT FLORENCE

1837-42. 1842

Upon what evidence the belief rests that this alone was a favourite seat of Dante, I do not know; but a man would little consult his own interest as a traveller, if he should busy himself with doubts as to the fact. The readiness with which traditions of this character are received, and the fidelity with which they are preserved from generation to generation, are an evidence of feelings honourable to our nature. I remember how, during one of my rambles in the course of a college vacation, I was pleased on being shown a seat near a kind of rocky cove at the source of the river, on which it was said that Congreve wrote his "Old Bachelor." One can scarcely hit on any performance less in harmony with the scene; but it was a local tribute paid to intellect by those who had not troubled themselves to estimate the moral worth of that author's comedies; and why should they? He was a man distinguished in his day; and the sequestered neighbourhood in which he often resided was perhaps as proud of him as Florence of her Dante: it is the same feeling, though proceeding from persons one cannot bring together in this way without offering some apology to the Shade of the great Visionary.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,  
 The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,  
 Nor giving heed to aught that passed the  
     while,

I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,  
 The laurelled Dante's favourite seat. A  
     throne,

In just esteem, it rivals; though no style  
 Be there of decoration to beguile  
 The mind, depressed by thought of great-  
     ness flown.

As a true man, who long had served the lyre,  
 I gazed with earnestness, and dared no more.  
 But in his breast the mighty Poet bore  
 A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.  
 Bold with the thought, in reverence I sate  
     down,

And, for a moment, filled that empty  
 Throne.

## XX

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE  
 BAPTIST, BY RAPHAEL, IN THE  
 GALLERY AT FLORENCE

1837-42. 1842

It was very hot weather during the week we stayed at Florence; and, never having been there before, I went through much hard service, and am not therefore ashamed to confess I fell asleep before this picture and sitting with my back towards the Venus de Medicis. Buonaparte — in answer to one who had spoken of his being in a sound sleep up to the moment when one of his great battles was to be fought, as a proof of the calmness of his mind and command over anxious thoughts — said frankly, that he slept because from bodily exhaustion he could not help it. In like manner it is noticed that criminals on the night previous to their execution seldom awake before they are called, a proof that the body is the master of us far more than we need be willing to allow. Should this note by any possible chance be seen by any of my countrymen who might have been in the gallery at the time (and several persons were there) and witnessed such an indecorum, I hope he will give up the opinion which he might naturally have formed to my prejudice.

THE Baptist might have been ordained to cry  
 Forth from the towers of that huge Pile,  
     wherein

His Father served Jehovah; but how win  
 Due audience, how for aught but scorn defy  
 The obstinate pride and wanton revelry  
 Of the Jerusalem below, her sin  
 And folly, if they with united din  
 Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?  
 Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert,  
     thence

To Her, as to her opposite in peace,  
 Silence, and holiness, and innocence,  
 To Her and to all Lands its warning sent,  
 Crying with earnestness that might not  
     cease,  
 "Make straight a highway for the Lord —  
     repent!"

## XXI

AT FLORENCE — FROM MICHAEL  
 ANGELO

1837-42. 1842

However at first these two sonnets from  
 Michael Angelo may seem in their spirit some-



what inconsistent with each other, I have not scrupled to place them side by side as characteristic of their great author, and others with whom he lived. I feel nevertheless a wish to know at what periods of his life they were respectively composed. The latter, as it expresses, was written in his advanced years when it was natural that the Platonism that pervades the one should give way to the Christian feeling that inspired the other: between both there is more than poetic affinity.

RAPT above earth by power of one fair face,  
Hers in whose sway alone my heart del-  
lights,  
I mingle with the blest on those pure  
heights  
Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a  
place.  
With Him who made the Work that Work  
accords  
So well, that by its help and through his  
grace  
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and  
words,  
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.  
Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot  
turn,  
I feel how in their presence doth abide  
Light which to God is both the way and  
guide;  
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,  
My noble fire emits the joyful ray  
That through the realms of glory shines for  
aye.

## XXII

AT FLORENCE—FROM M. AN-  
GELO

1837-42. 1842

ETERNAL Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,  
And loosened from the world, I turn to  
Thee;  
Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and  
flee  
To thy protection for a safe abode.  
The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon  
the tree,  
The meek, benign, and lacerated face,  
To a sincere repentance promise grace,  
To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.  
With justice mark not Thou, O Light  
divine,  
My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;

Neither put forth that way thy arm severe;  
Wash with thy blood my sins; thereto in-  
cline

More readily the more my years require  
Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

## XXIII

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CON-  
VENT IN THE APENNINES

1837-42. 1842

The political revolutions of our time have multiplied, on the Continent, objects that unavoidably call forth reflections such as are expressed in these verses, but the Ruins in those countries are too recent to exhibit, in anything like an equal degree, the beauty with which time and nature have invested the remains of our Convents and Abbeys. These verses it will be observed take up the beauty long before it is matured, as one cannot but wish it may be among some of the desolations of Italy, France, and Germany.

YE Trees! whose slender roots entwine

Altars that piety neglects;  
Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine  
Which no devotion now respects;  
If not a straggler from the herd  
Here ruminant, nor shrouded bird,  
Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride  
In aught that ye would grace or hide--  
How sadly is your love misplaced,  
Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!

Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one heeds,  
And ye—full often spurned as weeds—  
In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness  
From fractured arch and mouldering wall—  
Do but more touchingly recall  
Man's headstrong violence and Time's fleet-  
ness,  
Making the precincts ye adorn  
Appear to sight still more forlorn.

## XXIV

## IN LOMBARDY

1837-42. 1842

SEE, where his difficult way that Old Man  
wins  
Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—most  
hard

Appears *his* lot, to the small Worm's compared,

For whom his toil with early day begins.  
Acknowledging no task-master, at will  
(As if her labour and her ease were twins)  
*She* seems to work, at pleasure to lie still; —  
And softly sleeps within the thread she spins.

So fare they — the Man serving as her Slave.  
Ere long their fates do each to each conform:

Both pass into new being, — but the Worm,  
Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave;  
*His* volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend  
To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

## XXV

## AFTER LEAVING ITALY

1837-42. 1842

I had proof in several instances that the Carbonari, if I may still call them so, and their favourers, are opening their eyes to the necessity of patience, and are intent upon spreading knowledge actively but quietly as they can. May they have resolution to continue in this course! for it is the only one by which they can truly benefit their country. We left Italy by the way which is called the "Nuova Strada de Allmagna," to the east of the high passes of the Alps, which take you at once from Italy into Switzerland. This road leads across several smaller heights, and winds down different vales in succession, so that it was only by the accidental sound of a few German words that I was aware we had quitted Italy, and hence the unwelcome shock alluded to in the two or three last lines of the latter sonnet.

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with joy;  
how few,  
Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue,  
fame,

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE LATE INSURRECTIONS, 1837

1837. 1842

1

AN why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit  
Of sudden passion roused shall men attain  
True freedom where for ages they have lain  
Bound in a dark abominable pit,

Part from thee without pity dyed in shame:  
I could not — while from Venice we withdrew,

Led on till an Alpine strait confined our view

Within its depths, and to the shore we came  
Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,  
Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder colouring  
threw.

Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,  
(Too aptly emblem'd by that torpid lake)  
Shall a few partial breezes only creep? —  
Be its depths quickened; what thou dost inherit

Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,  
Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like  
sleep!

## XXVI

## CONTINUED

1837. 1842

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue  
Spake bitter words; words that did ill  
agree

With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,  
And divine Art, that fast to memory  
clung —

Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young  
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight  
How beautiful! how worthy to be sung  
In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!  
I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock  
That followed the first sound of German  
speech,

Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among.  
In that announcement, greeting seemed to  
mock

Parting; the casual word had power to  
reach

My heart, and filled that heart with conflict  
strong.

With life's best sinews more and more un-  
knit.

Here, there, a banded few who loathe the  
chain

May rise to break it; effort worse than vain  
For thee, O great Italian nation, split  
Into those jarring fractions. — Let thy scope  
Be one fixed mind for all; thy rights approve  
To thy own conscience gradually renewed;  
Learn to make Time the father of wise Hope;

Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,  
The light of Knowledge, and the warmth of  
Love.

## CONTINUED

## II

HARD task ! exclaim the undisciplined, to  
lean

On Patience coupled with such slow en-  
deavour,

That long-lived servitude must last for ever.  
Perish the grovelling few, who, prest be-  
tween

Wrongs and the terror of redress, would  
wean

Millions from glorious aims. Our chains to  
sever

Let us break forth in tempest now or  
never ! -

What, is there then no space for golden  
mean

And gradual progress ? — Twilight leads to  
day,

And, even within the burning zones of earth,  
The hastiest sunrise yields a temperate  
ray ;

The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives  
birth :

Think not that Prudence dwells in dark  
abodes,

She scans the future with the eye of gods.

## CONCLUDED

## III

As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow  
And wither, every human generation

Is, to the Being of a mighty nation,  
Locked in our world's embrace through  
weal and woe ;

Thought that should teach the zealot to  
forego

Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agitation,  
And seek through noiseless pains and mod-  
eration

The unblemished good they only can bestow.  
Alas ! with most, who weigh futurity

Against time present, passion holds the  
scales :

Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,  
And nations sink ; or, struggling to be  
free,

Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded  
whales

Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

"WHAT IF OUR NUMBERS  
BARELY COULD DEFY"

1837. 1837

WHAT if our numbers barely could defy  
The arithmetic of babes, must foreign  
hordes,

Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by words,  
Striking through English breasts the an-  
archy

Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie  
Our hands behind our backs with felon  
cords ?

Yields every thing to discipline of swords ?  
Is man as good as man, none low, none  
high ? —

Nor discipline nor valour can withstand  
The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,  
When in some great extremity breaks out  
A people, on their own beloved Land  
Risen, like one man, to combat in the sight  
Of a just God for liberty and right.

## A NIGHT THOUGHT

1837. 1842

These verses were thrown off extempore  
upon leaving Mrs. Luff's house at Fox-Ghyll,  
one evening. The good woman is not disposed  
to look at the bright side of things, and there  
happened to be present certain ladies who had  
reached the point of life where *youth* is ended,  
and who seemed to contend with each other in  
expressing their dislike of the country and cli-  
mate. One of them had been heard to say she  
could not endure a country where there was  
"neither sunshine nor cavaliers."

Lo ! where the Moon along the sky

Sails with her happy destiny ;

Oft is she hid from mortal eye

Or dimly seen,

But when the clouds asunder fly

How bright her mien !

Far different we — a froward race,  
Thousands though rich in Fortune's grace  
With cherished sullenness of pace

Their way pursue,

Ingrates who wear a smileless face

'The whole year through.

If kindred humours e'er would make  
My spirit droop for drooping's sake,

From Fancy following in thy wake,  
Bright ship of heaven!  
A counter impulse let me take  
And be forgiven.

TO THE PLANET VENUS

Upon its approximation (as an Evening  
Star) to the Earth, Jan. 1838.

1838. 1838

WHAT strong allurements draws, what  
spirit guides,  
Thee, Vesper! brightening still, as if the  
nearer  
Thou com'st to man's abode the spot grew  
dearer  
Night after night? True is it Nature hides  
Her treasures less and less. — Man now  
presides  
In power, where once he trembled in his  
weakness;  
Science advances with gigantic strides;  
But are we aught enriched in love and  
meekness?  
Aught dost thou see, bright Star! of pure  
and wise  
More than in humbler times graced human  
story;  
That makes our hearts more apt to sym-  
pathise  
With heaven, our souls more fit for future  
glory,  
When earth shall vanish from our closing  
eyes,  
Ere we lie down in our last dormitory?

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY  
MORNING, 1838

1838. 1838

This and the sonnet entitled "The Pillar  
of Trajan," p. 646, were composed on what  
we call the "Far Terrace" at Rydal Mount,  
where I have murmured out many thousands  
of verses.

Ir with old love of you, dear Hills! I  
share  
New love of many a rival image brought  
From far, forgive the wanderings of my  
thought:  
Nor art thou wronged, sweet May! when I  
compare

Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so  
fair,  
So rich to me in favours. For my lot  
Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot  
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air  
Mingling with thy soft breath! That morn-  
ing too,  
Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming  
Amid the sunny, shadowy, Colyseum;  
Heard them, unchecked by aught of sadden-  
ing hue,  
For victories there won by flower-crowned  
Spring,  
Chant in full choir their innocent Te Deum.

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING,  
1838

1838. 1838

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just be-  
gun,  
Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly guide.  
Does joy approach? they meet the coming  
tide;  
And sullenness avoid, as now they shun  
Pale twilight's lingering glooms, — and in  
the sun  
Couch near their dams, with quiet satis-  
fied;  
Or gambol — each with his shadow at his  
side,  
Varying its shape wherever he may run.  
As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy  
dew  
All turn, and court the shining and the  
green,  
Where herbs look up, and opening flowers  
are seen;  
Why to God's goodness cannot We be  
true,  
And so, His gifts and promises between,  
Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

"HARK! 'TIS THE THRUSH, UN-  
DAUNTED, UNDEPREST"

1838. 1838

HARK! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted, unde-  
prest,  
By twilight premature of cloud and rain;  
Nor does that roaring wind deaden his  
strain

Who carols thinking of his Love and nest,  
 And seems, as more incited, still more blest.  
 Thanks; thou hast snapped a fireside  
 Prisoner's chain,  
 Exulting Warbler! eased a fretted brain,  
 And in a moment charmed my cares to  
 rest.  
 Yes, I will forth, bold Bird! and front the  
 blast,  
 That we may sing together, if thou wilt,  
 So loud, so clear, my Partner through life's  
 day,  
 Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-  
 built  
 Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons past,  
 Thrilled by loose snatches of the social Lay.

"T IS HE WHOSE YESTER-  
 EVENING'S HIGH DISDAIN"

1838. 1838

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high dis-  
 daign  
 Beat back the roaring storm — but how  
 subdued  
 His day-break note, a sad vicissitude!  
 Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee  
 restrain?  
 Or, like the nightingale, her joyous vein  
 Pleased to renounce, does this dear Thrush  
 attune  
 His voice to suit the temper of yon Moon  
 Doubly depressed, setting, and in her wane?  
 Rise, tardy Sun! and let the Songster prove  
 (The balance trembling between night and  
 morn  
 No longer) with what ecstasy upborne  
 He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven  
 above,  
 And earth below, they best can serve true  
 gladness  
 Who meet most feelingly the calls of sad-  
 ness.

'OH WHAT A WRECK! HOW  
 CHANGED IN MIEN AND  
 SPEECH!"

1838(?). 1838

The sad condition of poor Mrs. Southey put  
 me upon writing this. It has afforded comfort  
 to many persons whose friends have been simi-  
 larly affected.

OH what a Wreck! how changed in mien  
 and speech!  
 Yet — though dread Powers, that work in  
 mystery, spin  
 Entanglings of the brain; though shadows  
 stretch  
 O'er the chilled heart — reflect; far, far  
 within  
 Hers is a holy Being, freed from Sin.  
 She is not what she seems, a forlorn wretch;  
 But delegated Spirits comfort fetch  
 To Her from heights that Reason may not  
 win.  
 Like Children, She is privileged to hold  
 Divine communion; both do live and move,  
 Whate'er to shallow Faith their ways unfold,  
 Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love;  
 Love pitying innocence not long to last,  
 In them — in Her our sins and sorrows past.

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS,  
 MAY 1838

1838. 1838

FAILING impartial measure to dispense  
 To every suitor, Equity is lame;  
 And social Justice, stript of reverence  
 For natural rights, a mockery and a shame;  
 Law but a servile dupe of false pretence,  
 If, guarding grossest things from common  
 claim  
 Now and for ever, She, to works that came  
 From mind and spirit, grudge a short-lived  
 fence.  
 "What! lengthened privilege, a lineal tie,  
 For *Books!*" Yes, heartless Ones, or be it  
 proved  
 That 'tis a fault in Us to have lived and  
 loved  
 Like others, with like temporal hopes to  
 die;  
 No public harm that Genius from her course  
 Be turned; and streams of truth dried up,  
 even at their source!

A POET TO HIS GRANDCHILD  
 SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

1838. 1838.

"SON of my buried Son, while thus thy  
 hand  
 Is clasping mine, it saddens me to think

How Want may press thee down, and with  
 thee sink  
 Thy children left unfit, through vain demand  
 Of culture, even to feel or understand  
 My simplest Lay that to their memory  
 May cling; — hard fate ! which haply need  
 not be  
 Did Justice mould the statutes of the Land.  
 A Book time-cherished and an honoured  
 name  
 Are high rewards; but bound they Nature's  
 claim  
 Or Reason's ? No — hopes spun in timid  
 line  
 From out the bosom of a modest home  
 Extend through unambitious years to come,  
 My careless Little-one, for thee and thine !”

“BLEST STATESMAN HE, WHOSE  
 MIND'S UNSELFISH WILL”

1838. 1838

BLEST Statesman He, whose Mind's unself-  
 ish will  
 Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts:  
 whose eye  
 Sees that, apart from magnanimity,  
 Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill  
 Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill  
 With patient care. What tho' assaults run  
 high,  
 They daunt not him who holds his ministry,  
 Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil  
 Its duties; — prompt to move, but firm to  
 wait, —  
 Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely  
 found;  
 That, for the functions of an ancient State —  
 Strong by her charters, free because im-  
 bound,  
 Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate —  
 Perilous is sweeping change, all chance un-  
 sound.

#### VALEDICTORY SONNET

1838. 1838

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in  
 1838.

SERVING no haughty Muse, my hands have  
 here  
 Disposed some cultured Flowerets (drawn  
 from spots

Where they bloomed singly, or in scattered  
 knots),  
 Each kind in several beds of one parterre;  
 Both to allure the casual Loiterer,  
 And that, so placed, my Nurslings may  
 requite  
 Studious regard with opportune delight,  
 Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err.  
 But metaphor dismissed, and thanks apart,  
 Reader, farewell ! My last words let them  
 be —  
 If in this book Fancy and Truth agree;  
 If simple Nature trained by careful Art  
 Through It have won a passage to thy heart;  
 Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee !

#### PROTEST AGAINST THE BALLOT

1838. 1838

FORTH rushed from Envy sprung and Self-  
 conceit,  
 A Power misnamed the SPIRIT OF REFORM,  
 And through the astonished Island swept  
 in storm,  
 Threatening to lay all orders at her feet  
 That crossed her way. Now stoops she to  
 entreat  
 Licence to hide at intervals her head  
 Where she may work, safe, undisquieted,  
 In a close Box, covert for Justice meet.  
 St. George of England ! keep a watchful  
 eye  
 Fixed on the Suitor; frustrate her request —  
 Stifle her hope; for, if the State comply,  
 From such Pandorian gift may come a Pest  
 Worse than the Dragon that bowed low his  
 crest,  
 Pierced by thy spear in glorious victory.

#### SONNETS

##### UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH IN SERIES

1839-40. 1841

1

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCAS-  
 TER CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM  
 THE SOUTH)

THIS Spot — at once unfolding sight so fair  
 Of sea and land, with yon grey towers that  
 still

Rise up as if to lord it over air —  
Might soothe in human breasts the sense of  
ill,

Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill  
The heart with joy and gratitude to God  
For all his bounties upon man bestowed:  
Why bears it then the name of "Weeping  
Hill"?

Thousands, as toward you old Lancastrian  
Towers,

A prison's crown, along this way they past  
For lingering durance or quick death with  
shame,

From this bare eminence thereon have cast  
Their first look — blinded as tears fell in  
showers

Shed on their chains; and hence that dole-  
ful name.

## II

TENDERLY do we feel by Nature's law  
For worst offenders: though the heart will  
heave

With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,  
In after thought, for Him who stood in  
awe

Neither of God nor man, and only saw,  
Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned  
On proud temptations, till the victim  
groaned

Under the steel his hand had dared to  
draw.

But oh, restrain compassion, if its course,  
As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside  
Judgments and aims and acts whose higher  
source

Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who  
died

Blameless — with them that shuddered o'er  
his grave,

And all who from the law firm safety crave.

## III

THE Roman Consul doomed his sons to die  
Who had betrayed their country. The  
stern word

Afforded (may it through all time afford)  
A theme for praise and admiration high.  
Upon the surface of humanity

He rested not; its depths his mind explored;  
He felt; but his parental bosom's lord  
Was Duty, — Duty calmed his agony.

And some, we know, when they by wilful  
act

A single human life have wrongly taken,

Pass sentence on themselves, confess the  
fact,

And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken  
Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith  
Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

## IV

Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought  
With such fell mastery that a man may dare  
By deeds the blackest purpose to lay bare;  
Is Death, for one to that condition brought,  
For him, or any one, the thing that ought  
To be most dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,  
Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare  
The murderer, ye, by sanction to that  
thought

Seemingly given, debase the general mind;  
Tempt the vague will tried standards to  
disown,

Nor only palpable restraints unbind,  
But upon Honour's head disturb the crown,  
Whose absolute rule permits not to with-  
stand

In the weak love of life his least command.

## V

NOT to the object specially designed,  
Howe'er momentous in itself it be,  
Good to promote or curb depravity,  
Is the wise Legislator's view confined.

His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most  
kind;

As all Authority in earth depends  
On Love and Fear, their several powers he  
blends,

Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.  
Uncaught by processes in show humane,  
He feels how far the act would derogate  
From even the humblest functions of the  
State;

If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain  
That never more shall hang upon her breath  
The last alternative of Life or Death.

## VI

YE brood of conscience — Spectres! that  
frequent

The bad Man's restless walk, and haunt  
his bed —

Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent  
In act, as hovering Angels when they spread  
Their wings to guard the unconscious  
Innocent —

Slow be the Statutes of the land to share  
A laxity that could not but impair

*Your* power to punish crime, and so prevent.

And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like about  
The adage on all tongues, "Murder will  
out."

How shall your ancient warnings work for  
good

In the full might they hitherto have shown,  
If for deliberate shedder of man's blood  
Survive not Judgment that requires his  
own?

## VII

BEFORE the world had past her time of  
youth

While polity and discipline were weak,  
The precept eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,  
Came forth — a light, though but as of day-  
break,

Strong as could then be borne. A Master  
meek

Proscribed the spirit fostered by that rule,  
Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his* school,  
And love the end, which all through peace  
must seek.

But lamentably do they err who strain  
His mandates, given rash impulse to con-  
trol

And keep vindictive thirstings from the  
soul,

So far that, if consistent in their scheme,  
They must forbid the State to inflict a pain,  
Making of social order a mere dream.

## VIII

FIT retribution, by the moral code  
Determined, lies beyond the State's em-  
brace,

Yet, as she may, for each peculiar case  
She plants well-measured terrors in the road  
Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and  
broad,

And, the main fear once doomed to banish-  
ment,

Far oftener then, bad ushering worse event,  
Blood would be spilt that in his dark abode  
Crime might lie better hid. And, should  
the change

Take from the horror due to a foul deed,  
Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,  
And, guilt escaping, passion then might  
plead

In angry spirits for her old free range,  
And the "wild justice of revenge" pre-  
vail.

## IX

THOUGH to give timely warning and deter  
Is one great aim of penalty, extend  
Thy mental vision further and ascend  
Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.  
What is a State? The wise behold in her  
A creature born of time, that keeps one  
eye

Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,  
To which her judgments reverently defer.  
Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice  
the State

Endues her conscience with external life  
And being, to preclude or quell the strife  
Of individual will, to elevate  
The grovelling mind, the erring to recall,  
And fortify the moral sense of all.

## X

OUR bodily life, some plead, that life the  
shrine

Of an immortal spirit, is a gift  
So sacred, so informed with light divine,  
That no tribunal, though most wise to sift  
Deed and intent, should turn the Being  
adrift

Into that world where penitential tear  
May not avail, nor prayer have for God's  
ear

A voice — that world whose veil no hand  
can lift

For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"  
*They* urge, "have interwoven claims and  
rights

Not to be jeopardised through foulest  
crime:

The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born  
lights."

Even so; but measuring not by finite sense  
Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

## XI

AH, think how one compelled for life to  
abide

Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the  
heart

Out of his own humanity, and part  
With every hope that mutual cares provide;  
And, should a less unnatural doom confide  
In life-long exile on a savage coast,  
Soon the relapsing penitent may boast

Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.  
Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and  
pure,

Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,



Leaving the final issue in *His* hands  
 Whose goodness knows no change, whose  
     love is sure,  
 Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge amiss,  
 And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

## XII

SEE the Condemned alone within his cell  
 And prostrate at some moment when remorse  
 Stings to the quick, and, with resistless force,  
 Assaults the pride she strove in vain to quell.

Then mark him, him who could so long rebel,  
 The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent  
 Before the Altar, where the Sacrament  
 Softens his heart, till from his eyes outwell  
 Tears of salvation. Welcome death! while  
     Heaven

Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;  
 While yet the solemn heed the State hath given

Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's voice  
 In faith, which fresh offences, were he cast  
 On old temptations, might for ever blast.

## XIII

## CONCLUSION

YES, though He well may tremble at the sound

Of his own voice, who from the judgment-seat

Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat  
 In death; though Listeners shudder all around,

They know the dread requital's source profound;

Nor is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete —  
 (Would that it were!) the sacrifice unmeet  
 For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs abound;

The social rights of man breathe purer air,  
 Religion deepens her preventive care;  
 Then, moved by needless fear of past abuse,  
 Strike not from Law's firm hand that awful rod,

But leave it thence to drop for lack of use:  
 Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty God!

## XIV

## APOLOGY

THE formal World relaxes her cold chain  
 For One who speaks in numbers; ampler scope

His utterance finds; and, conscious of the gain,

Imagination works with bolder hope  
 The cause of grateful reason to sustain;  
 And, serving Truth, the heart more strongly beats

Against all barriers which his labour meets  
 In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.

Enough;— before us lay a painful road,  
 And guidance have I sought in duteous love  
 From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence hath flowed

Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the way  
 Each takes in this high matter, all may move

Cheered with the prospect of a brighter day.

ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F.,  
 PAINTED BY MARGARET GILLIES

1840. 1851

WE gaze — nor grieve to think that we must die,

But that the precious love this friend hath sown

Within our hearts, the love whose flower hath blown

Bright as if heaven were ever in its eye,  
 Will pass so soon from human memory;  
 And not by strangers to our blood alone,  
 But by our best descendants be unknown,  
 Unthought of — this may surely claim a sigh.

Yet, blessed Art, we yield not to dejection;  
 Thou against Time so feelingly dost strive.  
 Where'er, preserved in this most true reflection,

An image of her soul is kept alive,  
 Some lingering fragrance of the pure affection,

Whose flower with us will vanish, must survive.

TO I. F.

1840. 1851

THE star which comes at close of day to shine

More heavenly bright than when it leads the morn,

Is friendship's emblem, whether the forlorn  
 She visiteth, or, shedding light benign

Through shades that solemnize Life's calm  
 decline,  
 Doth make the happy happier. This have we  
 Learnt, Isabel, from thy society,  
 Which now we too unwillingly resign  
 Though for brief absence. But farewell !  
 the page  
 Glimmers before my sight through thankful  
 tears,  
 Such as start forth, not seldom, to approve  
 Our truth, when we, old yet unchilled by age,  
 Call thee, though known but for a few fleet  
 years,  
 The heart-affianced sister of our love !

## POOR ROBIN

1840. 1842

I often ask myself what will become of Rydal Mount after our day. Will the old walls and steps remain in front of the house and about the grounds, or will they be swept away with all the beautiful mosses and ferns and wild geraniums and other flowers which their rude construction suffered and encouraged to grow among them ? — This little wild flower — "Poor Robin" — is here constantly courting my attention, and exciting what may be called a domestic interest with the varying aspects of its stalks and leaves and flowers. Strangely do the tastes of men differ according to their employment and habits of life. "What a nice well would that be," said a labouring man to me one day, "if all that rubbish was cleared off." The "*rubbish*" was some of the most beautiful mosses and lichens and ferns and other wild growths that could possibly be seen. Defend us from the tyranny of trimness and neatness showing itself in this way ! Chatterton says of freedom — "Upon her head wild weeds were spread;" and depend upon it if "the marvellous boy" had undertaken to give Flora a garland, he would have preferred what we are apt to call weeds to garden-flowers. True taste has an eye for both. Weeds have been called flowers out of place. I fear the place most people would assign to them is too limited. Let them come near to our abodes, as surely they may without impropriety or disorder.

Now when the primrose makes a splendid  
 show,  
 And lilies face the March-winds in full blow,  
 And humbler growths as moved with one  
 desire  
 Put on, to welcome spring, their best attire,  
 Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay

With his red stalks upon this sunny day !  
 And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, content

With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,  
 Mixed with the green, some shine not lacking power

To rival summer's brightest scarlet flower;  
 And flowers they well might seem to passers-by

If looked at only with a careless eye;  
 Flowers — or a richer produce (did it suit  
 The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come unsought,

Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought ?  
 Is the string touched in prelude to a lay

Of pretty fancies that would round him play  
 When all the world acknowledged elfin sway ?

Or does it suit our humour to commend  
 Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,  
 Whose practice teaches, spite of names, to show

Bright colours whether they deceive or no ? —

Nay, we would simply praise the free goodwill

With which, though slighted, he, on naked hill

Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;  
 Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,

Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow:  
 Yet more, we wish that men by men despised,

And such as lift their foreheads overprized,

Should sometimes think, where'er they chance to spy

This child of Nature's own humility,  
 What recompense is kept in store or left  
 For all that seem neglected or bereft;  
 With what nice care equivalents are given,  
 How just, how bountiful, the hand of Heaven.

## ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON

1840. 1842

This was composed while I was ascending Helvellyn in company with my daughter and her husband. She was on horseback and rode

to the top of the hill without once dismounting, a feat which it was scarcely possible to perform except during a season of dry weather; and a guide, with whom we fell in on the mountain, told us he believed it had never been accomplished before by any one.

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-horse stand

On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;

Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;

But by the Chieftain's look, though at his side

Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check

Is given to triumph and all human pride!

Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck

calm presence! Him the mighty deed

Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's rest,

As shows that time-worn face, for he such seed

Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of fame

In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy name,

Conqueror, 'mid some sad thoughts, divinely blest!

## TO A PAINTER

1841 (?). 1842

The picture which gave occasion to this and the following Sonnet was from the pencil of Miss M. Gillies, who resided for several weeks under our roof at Rydal Mount.

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed;

But 't is a fruitless task to paint for me,  
Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,

By the habitual light of memory see  
Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,

And smiles that from their birth-place ne'er shall flee

Into the land where ghosts and phantoms be;

And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.  
Couldst thou go back into far-distant years,

Or share with me, fond thought! that inward eye,

Then, and then only, Painter! could thy Art  
The visual powers of Nature satisfy,

Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,

Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.

## ON THE SAME SUBJECT

1841. 1842

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise

This Work, I now have gazed on it so long  
I see its truth with reluctant eyes;

O, my Beloved! I have done thee wrong,  
Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it sprung,

Ever too heedless, as I now perceive:

Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,

And the old day was welcome as the young,

As welcome, and as beautiful — in sooth

More beautiful, as being a thing more holy:

Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal youth

Of all thy goodness, never melancholy;

To thy large heart and humble mind, that cast

Into one vision, future, present, past.

## "WHEN SEVERN'S SWEEPING FLOOD HAD OVERTHROWN"

1842. 1842

WHEN Severn's sweeping flood had overthrown

St. Mary's Church, the preacher then would cry:—

"Thus, Christian people, God his might hath shown

That ye to him your love may testify;

Haste, and rebuild the pile." — But not a stone

Resumed its place. Age after age went by,  
And Heaven still lacked its due, though piety

In secret did, we trust, her loss bemoan.

But now her Spirit hath put forth its claim

In Power, and Poesy would lend her voice;

Let the new Church be worthy of its aim,

That in its beauty Cardiff may rejoice!

Oh! in the past if cause there was for shame,

Let not our times halt in their better choice.

"INTENT ON GATHERING WOOL  
FROM HEDGE AND BRAKE"

1842. 1842

Suggested by a conversation with Miss Fenwick, who along with her sister had, during their childhood, found much delight in such gatherings for the purposes here alluded to.

INTENT on gathering wool from hedge and  
brake

Yon busy Little-ones rejoice that soon  
A poor old Dame will bless them for the  
boon:

Great is their glee while flake they add to  
flake

With rival earnestness; far other strife  
Than will hereafter move them, if they  
make

Pastime their idol, give their day of life  
To pleasure snatched for reckless pleasure's  
sake.

Can pomp and show allay one heart-born  
grief?

Pains which the World inflicts can she  
requite?

Not for an interval however brief;  
The silent thoughts that search for steadfast  
light,

Love from her depths, and Duty in her  
might,

And Faith — these only yield secure relief.

PRELUDE

PREFIXED TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED  
"POEMS CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND LATE  
YEARS"

1842. 1842

These verses were begun while I was on a visit to my son John at Brigham, and were finished at Rydal. As the contents of the volume, to which they are now prefixed, will be assigned to their respective classes when my poems shall be collected in one volume. I should be at a loss where with propriety to place this prelude, being too restricted in its bearing to serve for a preface for the whole. The lines towards the conclusion allude to the discontents then fomented through the country by the agitators of the Anti-Corn-Law League: the particular causes of such troubles are transitory, but disposition to excite and liability to be excited are nevertheless permanent, and therefore proper objects for the poet's regard.

In desultory walk through orchard grounds,  
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I  
paused

The while a Thrush, urged rather than  
restrained

By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his song  
To his own genial instincts; and was heard  
(Though not without some plaintive tones  
between)

To utter, above showers of blossom swept  
From tossing boughs, the promise of a calm,  
Which the unsheltered traveller might re-  
ceive

With thankful spirit. The descant, and the  
wind

That seemed to play with it in love or scorn,  
Encouraged and endeared the strain of  
words

That haply flowed from me, by fits of si-  
lence

Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my  
Book!

Charged with those lays, and others of like  
mood,

Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,  
Go, single — yet aspiring to be joined

With thy Forerunners that through many  
a year

Have faithfully prepared each other's  
way —

Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled  
When and wherever, in this changeful

world,  
Power hath been given to please for higher  
ends

Than pleasure only; gladdening to prepare  
For wholesome sadness, troubling to refine,

Calming to raise; and, by a sapient Art  
Diffused through all the mysteries of our

Being,  
Softening the toils and pains that have not  
ceased

To cast their shadows on our mother Earth  
Since the primeval doom. Such is the

grace

Which, though unsued for, fails not to de-  
scend

With heavenly inspiration; such the aim  
That Reason dictates; and, as even the wish

Has virtue in it, why should hope to me  
Be wanting that sometimes, where fancied

ills  
Harass the mind and strip from off the  
bowers

Of private life their natural pleasantness,

A Voice — devoted to the love whose seeds  
 Are sown in every human breast, to beauty  
 Lodged within compass of the humblest  
 sight,  
 To cheerful intercourse with wood and  
 field,  
 And sympathy with man's substantial<sup>40</sup>  
 griefs —  
 Will not be heard in vain? And in those  
 days  
 When unforeseen distress spreads far and  
 wide  
 Among a People mournfully cast down,  
 Or into anger roused by venal words  
 In recklessness flung out to overturn  
 The judgment, and divert the general heart  
 From mutual good — some strain of thine,  
 my Book!  
 Caught at propitious intervals, may win  
 Listeners who not unwillingly admit<sup>50</sup>  
 Kindly emotion tending to console  
 And reconcile; and both with young and  
 old  
 Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude  
 For benefits that still survive, by faith  
 In progress, under laws divine, maintained.

### FLOATING ISLAND

1842. 1842

My poor sister takes a pleasure in repeating  
 these verses, which she composed not long be-  
 fore the beginning of her sad illness.

These lines are by the author of the "Ad-  
 dress to the Wind," etc., published heretofore  
 along with my Poems.

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work  
 On sky, earth, river, lake and sea;  
 Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,  
 All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth  
 (By throbbing waves long undermined)  
 Loosed from its hold; how, no one knew,  
 But all might see it float, obedient to the  
 wind;

Might see it, from the mossy shore  
 Discovered, float upon the Lake,  
 Float with its crest of trees adorned  
 On which the warbling birds their pastime  
 take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;  
 There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;  
 There insects live their lives, and die;  
 A peopled world it is; in size a tiny room.

And thus through many seasons' space  
 This little Island may survive;  
 But Nature, though we mark her not,  
 Will take away, may cease to give.

Perchance when you are wandering forth  
 Upon some vacant sunny day,  
 Without an object, hope, or fear,  
 Thither your eyes may turn — the Isle is  
 passed away;

Buried beneath the glittering Lake,  
 Its place no longer to be found;  
 Yet the lost fragments shall remain  
 To fertilize some other ground.

### "THE CRESCENT-MOON, THE STAR OF LOVE"

1842. 1842

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,  
 Glories of evening, as ye there are seen  
 With but a span of sky between —  
 Speak one of you, my doubts remove,  
 Which is the attendant Page and which the  
 Queen?

### TO A REDBREAST — (IN SICK- NESS)

(?). 1842

Almost the only verses by our lamented Sis-  
 ter Sara Hutchinson.

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,  
 And at my casement sing,  
 Though it should prove a farewell lay  
 And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy  
 The promise in thy song;  
 A charm, *that* thought can not destroy,  
 Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour  
 Thy song would still be dear,  
 And with a more than earthly power  
 My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,  
Come, and my requiem sing,  
Nor fail to be the harbinger  
Of everlasting Spring.

## MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

1842(?). 1842

## I

I was impelled to write this Sonnet by the disgusting frequency with which the word *artificial*, imported with other impertinences from the Germans, is employed by writers of the present day: for artificial let them substitute artificial, and the poetry written on this system, both at home and abroad, will be for the most part much better characterised.

*A POET!* — He hath put his heart to school,  
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff  
Which Art hath lodged within his hand --  
must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by rule.  
Thy Art be Nature; the live current quaff,  
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,  
In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool

Have killed him, Scorn should write his  
epitaph

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?

Because the lovely little flower is free  
Down to its root, and, in that freedom,  
bold;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree  
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,  
But from its *own* divine vitality.

## II

Hundreds of times have I seen, hanging about  
and above the vale of Rydal, clouds that might  
have given birth to this Sonnet, which was  
thrown off on the impulse of the moment one  
evening when I was returning home from the  
favourite walk of ours, along the Rothera, under  
Loughrigg.

THE most alluring clouds that mount the  
sky

Owe to a troubled element their forms,  
Their hues to sunset. If with raptured eye  
We watch their splendour, shall we covet  
storm,

And wish the Lord of day his slow decline

Would hasten, that such pomp may float on  
high?

Behold, already they forget to shine,  
Dissolve — and leave, to him who gazed, a  
sigh.

Not loth to thank each moment for its boon  
Of pure delight, come whencesoe'er it may,  
Peace let us seek, — to steadfast things  
attune

Calm expectations — leaving to the gay  
And volatile their love of transient bowers,  
The house that cannot pass away be ours.

## III

This Sonnet is recommended to the perusal of  
all those who consider that the evils under which  
we groan are to be removed or palliated by mea-  
sures ungoverned by moral and religious prin-  
ciples.

FEEL for the wrongs to universal ken  
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;  
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,  
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs  
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren  
Taught him concealment) hidden from all  
eyes

In silence and the awful modesties  
Of sorrow; — feel for all, as brother Men!  
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw  
By casual boons and formal charities;  
Learn to be just, just through impartial  
law;

Far as ye may, erect and equalise;  
And, what ye cannot reach by statute, draw  
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

## IV

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT  
HISTORIES AND NOTICES OF THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION

PORTENTOUS change when History can ap-  
pear

As the cool Advocate of foul device;  
Reckless audacity extol, and jeer  
At consciences perplexed with scruples  
nice!

They who bewail not, must abhor, the  
sneer

Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;  
Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice  
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.

Hath it not long been said the wrath of  
Man

Works not the righteousness of God ? Oh  
 bend,  
 Bend, ye Perverse ! to judgments from on  
 High,  
 Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual ban,  
 All principles of action that transcend  
 The sacred limits of humanity.

V  
 CONTINUED

Who ponders National events shall find  
 An awful balancing of loss and gain,  
 Joy based on sorrow, good with ill com-  
 bined,  
 And proud deliverance issuing out of pain  
 And direful throes; as if the All-ruling Mind,  
 With whose perfection it consists to ordain  
 Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,  
 Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind  
 By laws immutable. But woe for him  
 Who thus deceived shall lend an eager hand  
 To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,  
 And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make  
 dim;  
 And Will, whose office, by divine command,  
 Is to control and check disordered Powers ?

VI  
 CONCLUDED

LONG-FAVoured England ! be not thou  
 misled  
 By monstrous theories of alien growth,  
 Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,  
 Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red  
 With thy own blood, which tears in torrents  
 shed  
 Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth  
 Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,  
 Or wan despair — the ghost of false hope fled  
 Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,  
 My Country ! if such warning be held dear,  
 Then shall a Veteran's heart be thrilled  
 with joy,  
 One who would gather from eternal truth,  
 For time and season, rules that work to  
 cheer —  
 Not scourge, to save the People — not de-  
 stroy.

VII

MEN of the Western World ! in Fate's dark  
 book  
 Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire  
 portent ?

Think ye your British Ancestors forsook  
 Their native Land, for outrage provident;  
 From unsubmitive necks the bridle shook  
 To give, in their Descendants, freer vent  
 And wider range to passions turbulent,  
 To mutual tyranny a deadlier look ?  
 Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind's  
 breath,  
 Dive through the stormy surface of the  
 flood  
 To the great current flowing underneath;  
 Explore the countless springs of silent  
 good;  
 So shall the truth be better understood,  
 And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong in  
 faith.

VIII

Lo ! where she stands fixed in a saint-like  
 trance,  
 One upward hand, as if she needed rest  
 From rapture, lying softly on her breast !  
 Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glance;  
 But not the less — nay more — that counte-  
 nance,  
 While thus illumined, tells of painful strife  
 For a sick heart made weary of this life  
 By love, long crossed with adverse circum-  
 stance.  
 — Would She were now as when she hoped  
 to pass  
 At God's appointed hour to them who tread  
 Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet breathed  
 well content,  
 Well pleased, her foot should print earth's  
 common grass,  
 Lived thankful for day's light, for daily  
 bread,  
 For health, and time in obvious duty spent.

THE NORMAN BOY

1842. 1842

The subject of this poem was sent me by Mrs. Ogle, to whom I was personally unknown, with a hope on her part that I might be induced to relate the incident in verse ; and I do not regret that I took the trouble ; for not improbably the fact is illustrative of the boy's early piety, and may concur with my other little pieces on children to produce profitable reflection among my youthful readers. This is said however with an absolute conviction that children will derive most benefit from books which are not unworthy the perusal of persons of any age. I

protest with my whole heart against those productions, so abundant in the present day, in which the doings of children are dwelt upon as if they were incapable of being interested in anything else. On this subject I have dwelt at length in the poem on the growth of my own mind.

HIGH on a broad unfertile tract of forest-skirted Down,  
Nor kept by Nature for herself, nor made by man his own,  
From home and company remote and every playful joy,  
Served, tending a few sheep and goats, a ragged Norman Boy.

Him never saw I, nor the spot; but from an English Dame,  
Stranger to me and yet my friend, a simple notice came,  
With suit that I would speak in verse of that sequestered child  
Whom, one bleak winter's day, she met upon the dreary Wild.

His flock, along the woodland's edge with relics sprinkled o'er  
Of last night's snow, beneath a sky threatening the fall of more,  
Where tufts of herbage tempted each, were busy at their feed,  
And the poor Boy was busier still, with work of anxious heed.

There *was* he, where of branches rent and withered and decayed,  
For covert from the keen north wind, his hands a hut had made.

A tiny teneament, forsooth, and frail, as needs must be  
A thing of such materials framed, by a builder such as he.

The hut stood finished by his pains, nor seemingly lacked aught  
That skill or means of his could add, but the architect had wrought  
Some limber twigs into a Cross, well-shaped with fingers nice,  
To be engrafted on the top of his small edifice.

That Cross he now was fastening there, as the surest power and best  
For supplying all deficiencies, all wants of the rude nest

In which, from burning heat, or tempest driving far and wide,  
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his lonely head must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a standard for the true  
And faithful service of his heart in the worst that might ensue  
Of hardship and distressful fear, amid the houseless waste  
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by Providence was placed.

— Here, Lady ! might I cease; but nay, let us before we part  
With this dear holy shepherd-boy breathe a prayer of earnest heart,  
That unto him, where'er shall lie his life's appointed way,  
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove an all-sufficing stay.

## THE POET'S DREAM

## SEQUEL TO THE NORMAN BOY

1842. 1842

JUST as those final words were penned, the sun broke out in power,  
And gladdened all things; but, as chanced, within that very hour,  
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire flashed from clouds that hid the sky,  
And, for the Subject of my Verse, I heaved a pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts from heaviness be cleared,  
For bodied forth before my eyes the cross-crowned hut appeared;  
And, while around it storm as fierce seemed troubling earth and air,  
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling alone in prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake with articulate call,  
Bowed meekly in submissive fear, before the Lord of All;  
His lips were moving; and his eyes, up-raised to sue for grace,  
With soft illumination cheered the dimness of that place.



How beautiful is holiness ! — what wonder  
 if the sight,  
 Almost as vivid as a dream, produced a  
 dream at night ?  
 It came with sleep and showed the Boy, no  
 cherub, not transformed,  
 But the poor ragged Thing whose ways my  
 human heart had warmed.

Me had the dream equipped with wings, so  
 I took him in my arms,  
 And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling his  
 faint alarms,  
 And bore him high through yielding air my  
 debt of love to pay,  
 By giving him, for both our sakes, an hour  
 of holiday. 20

I whispered, "Yet a little while, dear  
 Child ! thou art my own,  
 To show thee some delightful thing, in  
 country or in town.  
 What shall it be ? a mirthful throng ? or  
 that holy place and calm  
 St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the  
 Church of Notre Dame ?

St. Ouen's golden Shrine ? Or choose what  
 else would please thee most  
 Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud  
 France, can boast !" <sup>30</sup>  
 "My Mother," said the Boy, "was born  
 near to a blessed Tree,  
 The Chapel Oak of Allonville; good Angel,  
 show it me !"

On wings, from broad and stedfast poise  
 let loose by this reply,  
 For Allonville, o'er down and dale, away  
 then did we fly;  
 O'er town and tower we flew, and fields in  
 May's fresh verdure drest;  
 The wings they did not flag; the Child,  
 though grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense, the  
 gleam of light that broke  
 Forth from his eyes, when first the Boy  
 looked down on that huge oak,  
 For length of days so much revered, so  
 famous where it stands  
 For twofold hallowing — Nature's care, and  
 work of human hands ?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I glided  
 round and round  
 The wide-spread boughs, for view of door,  
 window, and stair that wound  
 Gracefully up the gnarled trunk; nor left  
 we unsurveyed  
 The pointed steeple peering forth from the  
 centre of the shade. 40

I lighted — opened with soft touch the  
 chapel's iron door,  
 Past softly, leading in the Boy; and, while  
 from roof to floor  
 From floor to roof all round his eyes the  
 Child with wonder cast,  
 Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each live-  
 lier than the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk, the  
 sanctuary showed,  
 By light of lamp and precious stones, that  
 glimmered here, there glowed,  
 Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings hung in  
 sign of gratitude;  
 Sight that inspired accordant thoughts;  
 and speech I thus renewed:

"Hither the Afflicted come, as thou hast  
 heard thy Mother say,  
 And, kneeling, supplication make to our  
 Lady de la Paix; <sup>50</sup>  
 What mournful sighs have here been heard,  
 and, when the voice was stopt  
 By sudden pangs; what bitter tears have  
 on this pavement dropt !

Poor Shepherd of the naked Down, a  
 favoured lot is thine,  
 Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings full  
 many to this shrine;  
 From body pains and pains of soul thou  
 needest no release,  
 Thy hours as they flow on are spent, if not  
 in joy, in peace.

Then offer up thy heart to God in thank-  
 fulness and praise,  
 Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts,  
 in thy most busy days;  
 And in His sight the fragile Cross, on thy  
 small hut, will be  
 Holy as that which long hath crowned the  
 Chapel of this Tree; 60

Holy as that far seen which crowns the  
sumptuous Church in Rome  
Where thousands meet to worship God  
under a mighty Dome;  
He sees the bending multitude, he hears  
the choral rites,  
Yet not the less, in children's hymns and  
lonely prayer, delights.

God for his service needeth not proud work  
of human skill;  
They please him best who labour most to  
do in peace his will:  
So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits  
will be given  
Such wings as, when our Saviour calls, shall  
bear us up to heaven."

The Boy no answer made by words, but,  
so earnest was his look,  
Sleep fled, and with it fled the dream - re-  
corded in this book, <sup>70</sup>  
Lest all that passed should melt away in  
silence from my mind,  
As visions still more bright have done, and  
left no trace behind.

But oh! that Country-man of thine, whose  
eye, loved Child, can see  
A pledge of endless bliss in acts of early  
piety,  
In verse, which to thy ear might come,  
would treat this simple theme,  
Nor leave untold our happy flight in that  
adventurous dream.

Alas the dream, to thee, poor Boy! to thee  
from whom it flowed,  
Was nothing, scarcely can be aught, yet  
't was bounteously bestowed,  
If I may dare to cherish hope that gentle  
eyes will read  
Not loth, and listening Little-ones, heart-  
touched, their fancies feed. <sup>80</sup>

#### THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE SIDE

1842. 1842

The facts recorded in this Poem were given  
me, and the character of the person described,  
by my friend the Rev. R. P. Graves, who has  
long officiated as curate at Bowness, to the  
great benefit of the parish and neighbourhood.

The individual was well known to him. She  
died before these verses were composed. It is  
scarcely worth while to notice that the stanzas  
are written in the sonnet form, which was  
adopted when I thought the matter might be  
included in twenty-eight lines.

#### I

How beautiful when up a lofty height  
Honour ascends among the humblest poor,  
And feeling sinks as deep! See there the  
door  
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a weight  
Of blameless debt. On evil Fortune's spite  
She wasted no complaint, but strove to  
make  
A just repayment, both for conscience-sake  
And that herself and hers should stand  
upright  
In the world's eye. Her work when day-  
light failed  
Paused not, and through the depth of night  
she kept  
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed  
With some, the noble Creature never slept;  
But, one by one, the hand of death assailed  
Her children from her inmost heart be-  
wept.

#### II

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her tears  
to flow,  
Till a winter's noonday placed her buried  
Son  
Before her eyes, last child of many gone —  
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!  
His very feet bright as the dazzling snow  
Which they are touching; yea far brighter,  
even <sup>20</sup>  
As that which comes, or seems to come,  
from heaven,  
Surpasses aught these elements can show.  
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from that  
hour  
Whate'er befell she could not grieve or pine;  
But the Transfigured, in and out of season,  
Appeared, and spiritual presence gained a  
power  
Over material forms that mastered reason.  
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her  
thine!

#### III

But why that prayer? as if to her could  
come  
No good but by the way that leads to bliss

Through Death, — so judging we should  
judge amiss.

Since reason failed want is her threatened  
doom,

Yet frequent transports mitigate the gloom:  
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss  
The air or laugh upon a precipice;  
No, passing through strange sufferings to-  
ward the tomb

She smiles as if a martyr's crown were won:  
Oft, when light breaks through clouds or  
waving trees,

With outspread arms and fallen upon her  
knees

The Mother hails in her descending Son 10  
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies  
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

### AIREY-FORCE VALLEY

1842(?). 1842

— Not a breath of air

Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.  
From the brook's margin, wide around, the  
trees

Are stedfast as the rocks; the brook itself,  
Old as the hills that feed it from afar,  
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm  
Where all things else are still and motion-  
less.

And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance  
Escaped from boisterous winds that rage  
without,

Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,  
But to its gentle touch how sensitive  
Is the light ash! that, pendent from the  
brow

Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes  
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,  
Powerful almost as vocal harmony  
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his  
thoughts.

"LYRE! THOUGH SUCH POWER  
DO IN THY MAGIC LIVE"

1842(?). 1842

LYRE! though such power do in thy magic  
live

As might from India's farthest plain  
Recall the not unwilling Maid,  
Assist me to detain  
The lovely Fugitive:

Check with thy notes the impulse which,  
betrayed

By her sweet farewell looks, I longed to  
aid.

Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,  
The impregnable and awe-inspiring fort  
Of contemplation, the calm port 10  
By reason fenced from winds that sigh  
Among the restless sails of vanity.

But if no wish be hers that we should part,  
A humbler bliss would satisfy my heart.

Where all things are so fair,  
Enough by her dear side to breathe the air  
Of this Elysian weather;

And, on or in, or near, the brook, espy  
Shade upon the sunshine lying

Faint and somewhat pensively; 20  
And downward Image gaily vying  
With its upright living tree

'Mid silver clouds, and openings of blue  
sky

As soft almost and deep as her cerulean eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance  
Cast up the Stream or down at her be-  
seeching,

To mark its eddying foam-balls prettily  
distrest

By ever-changing shape and want of rest;  
Or watch, with mutual teaching,  
The current as it plays 30

In flashing leaps and stealthy  
creeps

Adown a rocky maze;  
Or note (translucent summer's happiest  
chance!)

In the slope-channel floored with pebbles  
bright,

Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,  
So vivid that they take from keenest sight  
The liquid veil that seeks not to hide them.

### TO THE CLOUDS

1842(?). 1842

These verses were suggested while I was  
walking on the foot-road between Rydal Mount  
and Grasmere. The clouds were driving over  
the top of Nab-Scar across the vale: they set  
my thoughts agoing, and the rest followed al-  
most immediately.

ARMY of Clouds! ye winged Hosts in  
troops

Ascending from behind the motionless brow

Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,  
 Oh whither with such eagerness of speed?  
 What seek ye, or what shun ye? of the gale  
 Companions, fear ye to be left behind,  
 Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field  
 Contend ye with each other? of the sea  
 Children, thus post ye over vale and height  
 To sink upon your mother's lap — and rest?  
 Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine

eyes<sup>11</sup>  
 Beheld in your impetuous march the like-  
 ness

Of a wide army pressing on to meet  
 Or overtake some unknown enemy? —  
 But your smooth motions suit a peaceful  
 aim;

And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares  
 Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds  
 Aerial, upon due migration bound  
 To milder climes; or rather do ye urge  
 In caravan your hasty pilgrimage<sup>20</sup>  
 To pause at last on more aspiring heights  
 Than these, and utter your devotion there  
 With thunderous voice? Or are ye jubi-  
 lant,

And would ye, tracking your proud lord  
 the Sun,

Be present at his setting; or the pomp  
 Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and  
 stand

Poising your splendours high above the  
 heads

Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen  
 God?

Whence, whence, ye Clouds! this eagerness  
 of speed?

Speak, silent creatures. — They are gone,  
 are fled,<sup>30</sup>

Buried together in yon gloomy mass  
 That loads the middle heaven; and clear  
 and bright

And vacant doth the region which they  
 thronged

Appear; a calm descent of sky conducting  
 Down to the unapproachable abyss,  
 Down to that hidden gulf from which they  
 rose

To vanish — fleet as days and months and  
 years,

Fleet as the generations of mankind,  
 Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,  
 The lingering world, when time hath ceased  
 to be.<sup>40</sup>

But the winds roar, shaking the rooted  
 trees,

And see! a bright precursor to a train  
 Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock  
 That sullenly refuses to partake  
 Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life  
 Invisible, the long procession moves  
 Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale  
 Which they are entering, welcome to mine  
 eye

That sees them, to my soul that owns in  
 them,

And in the bosom of the firmament<sup>50</sup>  
 O'er which they move, wherein they are  
 contained,

A type of her capacious self and all  
 Her restless progeny.

A humble walk

Here is my body doomed to tread, this  
 path,

A little hoary line and faintly traced,  
 Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's  
 foot

Or of his flock? — joint vestige of them  
 both.

I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts  
 Admit no bondage and my words have  
 wings.

Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp,  
 To accompany the verse? The mountain  
 blast<sup>61</sup>

Shall be our *hand* of music; he shall sweep  
 The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy  
 lake,

And search the fibres of the caves, and they  
 Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds.  
 And the wind loves them; and the gentle  
 gales —

Which by their aid re-clothe the naked  
 lawn

With annual verdure, and revive the woods,  
 And moisten the parched lips of thirsty  
 flowers --

Love them; and every idle breeze of air<sup>70</sup>  
 Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and  
 stars

Keep their most solemn vigils when the  
 Clouds

Watch also, shifting peaceably their place  
 Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when  
 they lie,

As if some Protean art the change had  
 wrought,

In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep  
 Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes  
 And all degrees of beauty. O ye Light-  
 nings

Ye are their perilous offspring; and the  
Sun—

Source inexhaustible of life and joy,       so  
And type of man's far-darting reason, there-  
fore

In old time worshipped as the god of verse,  
A blazing intellectual deity—  
Loves his own glory in their looks, and  
showers

Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood  
Visions with all but beatific light  
Enriched—too transient were they not re-  
newed

From age to age, and did not, while we gaze  
In silent rapture, credulous desire  
Nourish the hope that memory lacks not  
power

To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain<sup>90</sup>  
thought!

Yet why repine, created as we are  
For joy and rest, albeit to find them only  
Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?

#### "WANSFELL! THIS HOUSEHOLD HAS A FAVOURED LOT"

1842. 1845

WANSFELL! this Household has a favoured  
lot,

Living with liberty on thee to gaze,  
To watch while Morn first crowns thee  
with her rays,

Or when along thy breast serenely float  
Evening's angelic clouds Yet ne'er a note  
Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard!) thy  
praise

For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast  
brought

Of glory lavished on our quiet days.  
Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are gone  
From every object dear to mortal sight,  
As soon we shall be, may these words attest  
How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone  
Thy visionary majesties of light,  
How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found  
rest.

#### THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE

1842. 1842

SHADE of Caractacus, if spirits love  
The cause they fought for in their earthly  
home

To see the Eagle ruffled by the Dove  
May soothe thy memory of the chains of  
Rome.

These children claim thee for their sire; the  
breath  
Of thy renown, from Cambrian mountains,  
fans

A flame within them that despises death  
And glorifies the truant youth of Vannes.

With thy own scorn of tyrants they ad-  
vance,

But truth divine has sanctified their rage,  
A silver cross enchased with flowers of  
France

Their badge, attests the holy fight they  
wage.

The shrill defiance of the young crusade  
Their veteran foes mock as an idle noise;  
But unto Faith and Loyalty comes aid  
From Heaven, gigantic force to beardless  
boys.

#### GRACE DARLING

1843. 1845

AMONG the dwellers in the silent fields  
The natural heart is touched, and public  
way

And crowded street resound with ballad  
strains,

Inspired by ONE whose very name bespeaks  
Favour divine, exalting human love;

Whom, since her birth on bleak Northum-  
bria's coast,

Known unto few but prized as far as known,  
A single Act endears to high and low

Through the whole land—to Manhood,  
moved in spite

Of the world's freezing cares—to generous  
Youth—<sup>10</sup>

To Infancy, that lisps her praise—to Age  
Whose eye reflects it, glistening through a  
tear

Of tremulous admiration. Such true fame  
Awaits her *now*; but, verily, good deeds

Do not imperishable record find  
Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers may  
live

A theme for angels, when they celebrate  
The high-souled virtues which forgetful  
earth

Has witnessed. Oh ! that winds and waves  
 could speak  
 Of things which their united power called  
 forth 20  
 From the pure depths of her humanity !  
 A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,  
 Firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse  
 eared  
 On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-  
 place;  
 Or like the invincible Rock itself that  
 braves,  
 Age after age, the hostile elements,  
 As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.  
 All night the storm had raged, nor  
 ceased, nor paused,  
 When, as day broke, the Maid, through  
 misty air,  
 Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf, 30  
 Beating on one of those disastrous isles —  
 Half of a Vessel, half — no more; the  
 rest  
 Had vanished, swallowed up with all that  
 there  
 Had for the common safety striven in vain,  
 Or thither thronged for refuge. With quick  
 glance  
 Daughter and Sire through optic-glass  
 discern,  
 Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,  
 Creatures — how precious in the Maiden's  
 sight !  
 For whom, belike, the old Man grieves  
 still more  
 Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed 40  
 Where every parting agony is hushed,  
 And hope and fear mix not in further strife.  
 "But courage, Father ! let us out to sea —  
 A few may yet be saved." The Daughter's  
 words,  
 Her earnest tone, and look beaming with  
 faith,  
 Dispel the Father's doubts: nor do they  
 lack  
 The noble-minded Mother's helping hand  
 To launch the boat; and with her blessing  
 cheered,  
 And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,  
 Together they put forth, Father and Child !  
 Each grasps an oar, and struggling on they  
 go — 50  
 Rivals in effort; and, alike intent  
 Here to elude and there surmount, they  
 watch  
 The billows lengthening, mutually crossed

And shattered, and re-gathering their  
 might;  
 As if the tumult, by the Almighty's will  
 Were, in the conscious sea, roused and  
 prolonged  
 That woman's fortitude — so tried, so  
 proved —  
 May brighten more and more !  
 True to the mark,  
 They stem the current of that perilous  
 gorge, 60  
 Their arms still strengthening with the  
 strengthening heart,  
 Though danger, as the Wreck is neared,  
 becomes  
 More imminent. Not unseen do they  
 approach;  
 And rapture, with varieties of fear  
 Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames  
 Of those who, in that dauntless energy,  
 Foretaste deliverance; but the least per-  
 turbed  
 Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he per-  
 ceives  
 That of the pair — tossed on the waves to  
 bang  
 Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life — 70  
 One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,  
 Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,  
 A guardian Spirit sent from pitying Heaven,  
 In woman's shape. But why prolong the  
 tale,  
 Casting weak words amid a host of thoughts  
 Armed to repel them ? Every hazard faced  
 And difficulty mastered, with resolve  
 That no one breathing should be left to  
 perish,  
 This last remainder of the crew are all  
 Placed in the little boat, then o'er the  
 deep 80  
 Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,  
 And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged  
 Within the sheltering Lighthouse. — Shout,  
 ye Waves,  
 Send forth a song of triumph. Waves and  
 Winds,  
 Exult in this deliverance wrought through  
 faith  
 In Him whose Providence your rage hath  
 served !  
 Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert  
 join !  
 And would that some immortal Voice — a  
 Voice  
 Fitly attuned to all that gratitude

Breathes out from floor or couch, through  
 pallid lips  
 Of the survivors — to the clouds might<sup>90</sup>  
 bear —  
 Blended with praise of that parental love,  
 Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden  
 grew  
 Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,  
 Though young so wise, though meek so  
 resolute —  
 Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,  
 Yea, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING'S  
 name !

"WHILE BEAMS OF ORIENT  
 LIGHT SHOOT WIDE AND  
 HIGH"

1843. 1845

WHILE beams of orient light shoot wide  
 and high,  
 Deep in the vale a little rural Town  
 Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its  
 own,  
 That mounts not toward the radiant  
 morning sky,  
 But, with a less ambitious sympathy,  
 Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the cares  
 Troubles and toils that every day prepares.  
 So Fancy, to the musing Poet's eye,  
 Endears that Lingerer. And how blest her  
 sway  
 (Like influence never may my soul reject)  
 If the calm Heaven, now to its zenith decked  
 With glorious forms in numberless array,  
 To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose  
 Gleams from a world in which the saints  
 repose.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER  
 WORDSWORTH, D. D., MASTER  
 OF HARROW SCHOOL

After the perusal of his *Theophilus Anglicanus*, recently published.

1843. 1845

ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy  
 hand  
 Have I received this proof of pains bestowed  
 By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the road  
 That, in our native isle, and every land,  
 The Church, when trusting in divine com-  
 mand  
 And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod:

O may these lessons be with profit scanned  
 To thy heart's wish, thy labour blest by  
 God !

So the bright faces of the young and gay  
 Shall look more bright — the happy, happier  
 still;

Catch, in the pauses of their keenest play,  
 Motions of thought which elevate the will  
 And, like the Spire that from your classic  
 Hill

Points heavenward, indicate the end and  
 way.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITE  
 CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK

1843. 1845

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither drew  
 The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you  
 His eyes have closed ! And ye, loved books,  
 no more

Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,  
 To works that ne'er shall forfeit their re-  
 nown,

Adding immortal labours of his own —  
 Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal  
 For the State's guidance, or the Church's  
 weal,

Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,  
 Informed his pen, or wisdom of the heart,  
 Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's  
 mind

By reverence for the rights of all mankind.  
 Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast  
 Could private feelings meet for holier rest.  
 His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a  
 cloud

From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven was  
 vowed

Through his industrious life, and Christian  
 faith

Calmed in his soul the fear of change and  
 death.

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL  
 AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY

1844. 1845

Is then no nook of English ground secure  
 From rash assault ? Schemes of retire-  
 ment sown

In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept pure

As when their earliest flowers of hope were  
blown,  
Must perish;—how can they this blight  
endure?

And must he too the ruthless change bemoan  
Who scorns a false utilitarian lure  
'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown?  
Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from Orrest-  
head

Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous  
glance:

Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance  
Of nature; and, if human hearts be dead,  
Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with  
your strong

And constant voice, protest against the  
wrong.

'PROUD WERE YE, MOUNTAINS,  
WHEN, IN TIMES OF OLD"

1844. 1845

PROUD were ye, Mountains, when, in times  
of old,

Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,  
Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in each  
sear:

Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst  
of Gold,

That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,  
Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall be  
sold,

And clear way made for her triumphal car  
Through the beloved retreats your arms  
enfold!

Heard ye that Whistle? As her long-linked  
Train

Swept onwards, did the vision cross your  
view?

Yes, ye were startled;—and, in balance true,  
Weighing the mischief with the promised  
gain,

Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call on  
you

To share the passion of a just disdain.

AT FURNESS ABBEY

1844. 1845

HERE, where, of havoc tired and rash un-  
doing,

Man left this Structure to become Time's  
prey

A soothing spirit follows in the way  
That Nature takes, her counter-work pur-  
suing,

See how her Ivy clasps the sacred Ruin  
Fall to prevent or beautify decay;  
And, on the mouldered walls, how bright,  
how gay,

The flowers in pearly dew's their bloom  
renewing!

Thanks to the place, blessings upon the hour;  
Even as I speak the rising Sun's first smile  
Gleams on the grass-crowned top of yon  
tall Tower

Whose cawing occupants with joy proclaim  
Prescriptive title to the shattered pile  
Where, Cavendish, *thine* seems nothing but  
a name!

"FORTH FROM A JUTTING  
RIDGE, AROUND WHOSE BASE"

1845. 1845

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around whose  
base

Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks  
ascend

In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair  
Rising to no ambitious height; yet both,  
O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery  
mead,

Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes  
Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,  
To one or other brow of those twin Peaks  
Were two adventurous Sisters wont to  
climb,

And took no note of the hour while thence  
they gazed,

The blooming heath their couch, gazed, side  
by side,

In speechless admiration. I, a witness  
And frequent sharer of their calm delight  
With thankful heart, to either Eminence  
Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.  
Now are they parted, far as Death's cold  
hand

Hath power to part the Spirits of those who  
love

As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—  
That, while the generations of mankind  
Follow each other to their hiding-place  
In time's abyss, are privileged to endure  
Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced  
With like command of beauty—grant your  
aid



For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent claim,  
That their pure joy in nature may survive  
From age to age in blended memory.

## THE WESTMORELAND GIRL

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

1845. 1845

### PART I

SEEK who will delight in fable  
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb  
Leapt from this steep bank to follow  
'Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

Far and wide on hill and valley  
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,  
And the bleating mother's Young-one  
Struggled with the flood in vain:

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden  
(Ten years scarcely had she told)  
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,  
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky channel,  
Sinking, rising, on they go,  
Peace and rest, as seems, before them  
Only in the lake below.

Oh! it was a frightful current  
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved;  
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,  
Shout in triumph, both are saved;

Saved by courage that with danger  
Grew, by strength the gift of love,  
And belike a guardian angel  
Came with succour from above.

### PART II

Now, to a maturer Audience,  
Let me speak of this brave Child  
Left among her native mountains  
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,  
Mother's care no more her guide,  
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan  
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame, — remembrance makes  
him  
Loth to rule by strict command;  
Still upon his cheek are living  
Touches of her infant hand,

Dear caresses given in pity,  
Sympathy that soothed his grief,  
As the dying mother witnessed  
To her thankful mind's relief.

Time passed on; the Child was happy,  
Like a Spirit of air she moved,  
Wayward, yet by all who knew her  
For her tender heart beloved.

Scarcely less than sacred passions,  
Bred in house, in grove, and field,  
Link her with the inferior creatures,  
Urge her powers their rights to shield.

Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,  
Learn how she can feel alike  
Both for tiny harmless minnow  
And the fierce and sharp-toothed pike.

Merciful protectress, kindling  
Into anger or disdain;  
Many a captive bath she rescued,  
Others saved from lingering pain.

Listen yet awhile; — with patience  
Hear the homely truths I tell,  
She in Grasmere's old church-steeple  
Tolled this day the passing-bell.

Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains  
To their echoes gave the sound,  
Notice punctual as the minute,  
Warning solemn and profound.

She, fulfilling her sire's office,  
Rang alone the far-heard knell,  
Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,  
Paid to One who loved her well.

When his spirit was departed  
On that service she went forth;  
Nor will fail the like to render  
When his corse is laid in earth.

What then wants the Child to temper,  
In her breast, unruly fire,  
To control the froward impulse  
And restrain the vague desire?

Easily a pious training  
And a stedfast outward power  
Would supplant the weeds and cherish,  
In their stead, each opening flower.

Thus the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,  
Woman-grown, meek-hearted, sage,  
May become a blest example  
For her sex, of every age.

Watchful as a wheeling eagle,  
Constant as a soaring lark,  
Should the country need a heroine,  
She might prove our Maid of Arc.

Leave that thought; and here be uttered  
Prayer that Grace divine may raise  
Her humane courageous spirit  
Up to heaven, thro' peaceful ways.

## AT FURNESS ABBEY

1845. 1845

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to THIS  
ground

Withdrawn for noontide rest. They sit,  
they walk

Among the Ruins, but no idle talk  
Is heard; to grave demeanour all are bound;  
And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful  
sound

Hallows once more the long-deserted Quire  
And thrills the old sepulchral earth, around.  
Others look up, and with fixed eyes ad-  
mire

That wide-spanned arch, wondering how it  
was raised,

To keep, so high in air, its strength and  
grace:

All seem to feel the spirit of the place,  
And by the general reverence God is praised.  
Profane Despoilers, stand ye not reprov'd,  
While thus these simple-hearted men are  
moved?

"YES! THOU ART FAIR, YET  
BE NOT MOVED"

1845. 1845

YES! thou art fair, yet be not moved  
To scorn the declaration,  
That sometimes I in thee have loved  
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir;  
Dear Maid, this truth believe,  
Minds that have nothing to confer  
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit  
To feed my heart's devotion,  
By laws to which all Forms submit  
In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

"WHAT HEAVENLY SMILES! O  
LADY MINE"

1845. 1845

WHAT heavenly smiles! O Lady mine  
Through my very heart they shine;  
And, if my brow gives back their light,  
Do thou look gladly on the sight;  
As the clear Moon with modest pride  
Beholds her own bright beams  
Reflected from the mountain's side  
And from the headlong streams.

## TO A LADY

IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I  
WOULD WRITE HER A POEM UPON  
SOME DRAWINGS THAT SHE HAD MADE  
OF FLOWERS IN THE ISLAND OF MA-  
DEIRA

1845. 1845

FAIR Lady! can I sing of flowers  
That in Madeira bloom and fade,  
I who ne'er sate within their bowers,  
Nor through their sunny lawns have  
strayed?

How they in sprightly dance are worn  
By Shepherd-groom or May-day queen,  
Or holy festal pomps adorn,  
These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho' to me the pencil's art  
No like remembrances can give,  
Your portraits still may reach the heart  
And there for gentle pleasure live;  
While Fancy ranging with free scope  
Shall on some lovely Alien set  
A name with us endeared to hope,  
To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,  
Some new resemblance we may trace:

A *Heart's-ease* will perhaps be there,  
 A *Speedwell* may not want its place. 20  
 And so may we, with charmed mind  
 Beholding what your skill has wrought,  
 Another *Star-of-Bethlehem* find,  
 A new *Forget-me-not*.

From earth to heaven with motion fleet  
 From heaven to earth our thoughts will  
 pass,  
 A *Holy-thistle* here we meet  
 And there a *Shepherd's weather-glass*;  
 And haply some familiar name  
 Shall grace the fairest, sweetest plant 30  
 Whose presence cheers the drooping frame  
 Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its powers beguile  
 Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier  
 breath;  
 Alas! that meek, that tender smile  
 Is but a harbinger of death:  
 And pointing with a feeble hand  
 She says, in faint words by sighs broken,  
 Bear for me to my native land  
 This precious Flower, true love's last  
 token. 40

### "GLAD SIGHT WHEREVER NEW WITH OLD"

1845 (?). 1845

GLAD sight wherever new with old  
 Is joined through some dear homeborn tie;  
 The life of all that we behold  
 Depends upon that mystery.  
 Vain is the glory of the sky,  
 The beauty vain of field and grove,  
 Unless, while with admiring eye  
 We gaze, we also learn to love.

### LOVE LIES BLEEDING

1845 (?). 1845

It has been said that the English, though  
 their country has produced so many great poets,  
 is now the most unpoetical nation in Europe.  
 It is probably true; for they have more tempta-  
 tion to become so than any other European  
 people. Trade, commerce, and manufactures,  
 physical science, and mechanic arts, out of  
 which so much wealth has arisen, have made  
 our countrymen infinitely less sensible to move-  
 ments of imagination and fancy than were our

forefathers in their simple state of society.  
 How touching and beautiful were, in most in-  
 stances, the names they gave to our indigenous  
 flowers, or any other they were familiarly ac-  
 quainted with! — Every month for many years  
 have we been importing plants and flowers  
 from all quarters of the globe, many of which  
 are spread through our gardens, and some per-  
 haps likely to be met with on the few Commons  
 which we have left. Will their botanical  
 names ever be displaced by plain English ap-  
 pellations, which will bring them home to our  
 hearts by connection with our joys and sorrows?  
 It can never be, unless society treads back her  
 steps towards those simplicities which have  
 been banished by the undue influence of towns  
 spreading and spreading in every direction, so  
 that city-life with every generation takes more  
 and more the lead of rural. Among the an-  
 cients, villages were reckoned the seats of bar-  
 barism. Refinement, for the most part false,  
 increases the desire to accumulate wealth; and  
 while theories of political economy are boast-  
 fully pleading for the practice, inhumanity  
 pervades all our dealings in buying and selling.  
 This selfishness wars against disinterested  
 imagination in all directions, and, evils coming  
 round in a circle, barbarism spreads in every  
 quarter of our island. Oh for the reign of jus-  
 tice, and then the humblest man among us  
 would have more power and dignity in and  
 about him than the highest have now!

You call it, "Love lies bleeding," — so you  
 may,  
 Though the red Flower, not prostrate,  
 only droops,  
 As we have seen it here from day to day,  
 From month to month, life passing not  
 away:  
 A flower how rich in sadness! Even thus  
 stoops,  
 (Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marvellous  
 power)  
 Thus leans, with hanging brow and body  
 bent  
 Earthward in uncomplaining languishment  
 The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower!  
 ('Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led,  
 Though by a slender thread)  
 So drooped Adonis bathed in sanguine dew  
 Of his death-wound, when he from innocent  
 air  
 The gentlest breath of resignation drew;  
 While Venus in a passion of despair  
 Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair  
 Spangled with drops of that celestial  
 shower.

She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do;  
But pangs more lasting far, *that* Lover  
knew

Who first, weighed down by scorn, in some  
lone bower

Did press this semblance of unpitied  
smart

Into the service of his constant heart,  
His own dejection, downcast Flower! could  
share

With thine, and gave the mournful name  
which thou wilt ever bear.

#### COMPANION TO THE FORE- GOING

1845(?). 1845

NEVER enlivened with the liveliest ray  
That fosters growth or cheeks or cheers  
decay,

Nor by the heaviest rain-drops more  
deprest,

This Flower, that first appeared as sum-  
mer's guest,

Preserves her beauty 'mid autumnal leaves  
And to her mournful habits fondly cleaves.  
When files of stateliest plants have ceased  
to bloom,

One after one submitting to their doom,  
When her coevals each and all are fled,  
What keeps her thus reclined upon her  
lonesome bed?

The old mythologists, more impressed  
than we

Of this late day by character in tree  
Or herb, that claimed peculiar sympathy,  
Or by the silent lapse of fountain clear,  
Or with the language of the viewless air  
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a cause  
To solve the mystery, not in Nature's  
laws

But in Man's fortunes. Hence a thousand  
tales

Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.  
Nor doubt that something of their spirit  
swayed

The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick  
Maid,

Who, while each stood companionless and  
eyed

This undeparting Flower in crimson dyed,  
Thought of a wound which death is slow to  
cure,

A fate that has endured and will endure,

And, patience coveting yet passion feeding,  
Called the dejected Lingerer, *Loves lies*  
*bleeding.*

#### THE CUCKOO-CLOCK

1845. 1845

Of this clock I have nothing further to say  
than what the poem expresses, except that it  
must be here recorded that it was a present  
from the dear friend for whose sake these notes  
were chiefly undertaken, and who has written  
them from my dictation.

WOULDEST thou be taught, when sleep has  
taken flight,

By a sure voice that can most sweetly tell,  
How far off yet a glimpse of morning light,  
And if to lure the truant back be well,  
Forbear to covet a Repeater's stroke,  
That, answering to thy touch, will sound  
the hour;

Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-clock  
For service hung behind thy chamber-door;  
And in due time the soft spontaneous shock,  
The double note, as if with living power, 10  
Will to composure lead — or make thee  
blithe as bird in bower.

List, Cuckoo — Cuckoo! — oft tho' tem-  
pests howl,

Or nipping frost remind thee trees are bare,  
How cattle pine, and droop the shivering  
fowl,

Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy air;  
I speak with knowledge, — by that Voice  
beguiled,

Thou wilt salute old memories as they  
throng

Into thy heart; and fancies, running wild  
Through fresh green fields, and budding  
groves among,

Will make thee happy, happy as a child: 20  
Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers,  
and song,

And breathe as in a world where nothing  
can go wrong.

And know — that, even for him who shuns  
the day

And nightly tosses on a bed of pain;  
Whose joys, from all but memory swept  
away,

Must come unhopd for, if they come again;

Know — that, for him whose waking  
thoughts, severe  
As his distress is sharp, would scorn my  
theme,  
The mimic notes, striking upon his ear  
In sleep, and intermingling with his  
dream,  
Could from sad regions send him to a dear  
Delightful land of verdure, shower and  
gleam,  
To mock the *wandering* Voice beside some  
haunted stream.

O bounty without measure ! while the grace  
Of Heaven doth in such wise, from humblest  
springs,  
Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that trace  
A mazy course along familiar things,  
Well may our hearts have faith that bless-  
ings come,  
Streaming from founts above the starry sky,  
With angels when their own untroubled  
home  
They leave, and speed on nightly embassy  
To visit earthly chambers, — and for whom?  
Yea, both for souls who God's forbearance  
try,  
And those that seek his help, and for his  
mercy sigh.

"SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL  
SO SENSITIVE"

1845. 1845

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
Would that the little Flowers were born to  
live,  
Conscious of half the pleasure which they  
give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were  
known  
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,  
thrown  
On the smooth surface of this naked stone !

And what if hence a bold desire should mount  
High as the Sun, that he could take account  
Of all that issues from his glorious fount !

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid  
These delicate companionships are made;  
And how he rules the pomp of light and  
shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines by  
night  
So privileged, what a countenance of delight  
Would through the clouds break forth on  
human sight !

Fond fancies ! wheresoe'er shall turn thine  
eye  
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,  
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,  
Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled,  
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS

1845. 1845

DAYS undefiled by luxury or sloth,  
Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,  
Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness obeyed,  
Words that require no sanction from an  
oath,

And simple honesty a common growth —  
This high repute, with bounteous Nature's  
aid,

Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed  
At will, your power the measure of your  
truth ! -

All who revere the memory of Penn  
Grieve for the land on whose wild woods  
his name

Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,  
Renounced, abandoned by degenerate Men  
For state-dishonour black as ever came  
To upper air from Mammon's loathsome  
den.

"YOUNG ENGLAND — WHAT IS  
THEN BECOME OF OLD"

1845. 1845

YOUNG ENGLAND — what is then become of  
Old,

Of dear Old England ? Think they she is  
dead,

Dead to the very name ? Presumption fed  
On empty air ! That name will keep its  
hold

In the true filial bosom's inmost fold  
Forever. — The Spirit of Alfred, at the head  
Of all who for her rights watched, toiled  
and bled,

Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.  
What — how ! shall she submit in will and  
    deed

Go Beardless Boys — an imitative race,  
The *servum pecus* of a Gallic breed ?  
Dear Mother ! if thou *must* thy steps re-  
    trace,  
Go where at least meek Innocency dwells ;  
Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles.

“THOUGH THE BOLD WINGS OF  
POESY AFFECT”

1845 (?). 1845

THOUGH the bold wings of Poesy affect  
The clouds, and wheel around the mountain  
    tops  
Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she drops  
Well pleased to skim the plain with wild  
    flowers deckt  
Or muse in solemn grove whose shades  
    protect  
The lingering dew -- there steals along, or  
    stops  
Watching the least small bird that round  
    her hops,  
Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.  
Her functions are they therefore less divine,  
Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave  
    intent  
Her simplest fancies ? Should that fear be  
    thine,  
Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present  
One offering, kneel before her modest  
    shrine,  
With brow in penitential sorrow bent !

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF  
THE BIRD OF PARADISE

1845 (?). 1845

This subject has been treated of in another  
note. I will here only by way of comment direct  
attention to the fact that pictures of animals  
and other productions of nature as seen in con-  
servatories, menageries, museums, etc., would  
do little for the national mind, nay they would  
be rather injurious to it, if the imagination were  
excluded by the presence of the object, more or  
less out of a state of nature. If it were not that  
we learn to talk and think of the lion and the  
eagle, the palm-tree and even the cedar, from  
the impassioned introduction of them so fre-  
quently into Holy Scripture and by great poets,

and divines who write as poets, the spiritual part  
of our nature, and therefore the higher part of  
it, would derive no benefit from such intercourse  
with such objects.

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts en-  
    dowed,  
And a true master of the glowing strain,  
Might scan the narrow province with disdain  
That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.  
This, this the Bird of Paradise ! disclaim  
The daring thought, forget the name ;  
This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers  
    might own  
As no unworthy Partner in their flight  
Through seas of ether, where the ruffling  
    sway  
Of nether air's rude billows is unknown ; 10  
Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime  
    they  
Through India's spicy regions wing their  
    way,  
Might bow to as their Lord. What  
    character,  
O sovereign Nature ! I appeal to thee,  
Of all thy feathered progeny  
Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair ?  
So richly decked in variegated down,  
Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy  
    brown,  
Tints softly with each other blended,  
Hues doubtfully begun and ended ; 20  
Or intershooting, and to sight  
Lost and recovered, as the rays of light  
Glance on the conscious plumes touched  
    here and there ?  
Full surely, when with such proud gifts of  
    life  
Began the pencil's strife,  
O'erweening Art was caught as in a snare.  
A sense of seemingly presumptuous  
    wrong  
Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song ;  
But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew  
A juster judgment from a calmer view ; 30  
And, with a spirit freed from discontent,  
Thankfully took an effort that was meant  
Not with God's bounty, Nature's love to vie,  
Or made with hope to please that inward  
    eye  
Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy,  
But to recall the truth by some faint trace  
Of power ethereal and celestial grace,  
That in the living Creature find on earth a  
    place.

## SONNET

1846. 1850

WHY should we weep or mourn, Angelic  
 boy,  
 For such thou wert ere from our sight  
 removed,  
 Holy, and ever dutiful — beloved  
 From day to day with never-ceasing joy,  
 And hopes as dear as could the heart em-  
 ploy  
 In aught to earth pertaining? Death has  
 proved  
 His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved —  
 Death conscious that he only could de-  
 stroy  
 The bodily frame. That beauty is laid  
 low  
 To moulder in a far-off field of Rome;  
 But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy Spirit's  
 home:  
 When such divine communion, which we  
 know,  
 Is felt, thy Roman burial place will be  
 Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee.

"WHERE LIES THE TRUTH? HAS  
 MAN, IN WISDOM'S CREED"

1846. 1850

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's  
 creed,  
 A pitiable doom; for respite brief  
 A care more anxious, or a heavier grief?  
 Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed  
 God's bounty, soon forgotten; or indeed,  
 Must Man, with labour born, awake to  
 sorrow  
 When Flowers rejoice and Larks with rival  
 speed  
 Spring from their nests to bid the Sun good  
 morrow?  
 They mount for rapture as their songs pro-  
 claim  
 Warbled in hearing both of earth and  
 sky;  
 But o'er the contrast wherefore heave a  
 sigh?  
 Like those aspirants let us soar — our  
 aim,  
 Through life's worst trials, whether shocks  
 or snares,  
 A happier, brighter, purer Heaven than  
 theirs.

"I KNOW AN AGED MAN CON-  
 STRAINED TO DWELL"

1846. 1850

I KNOW an aged Man constrained to dwell  
 In a large house of public charity,  
 Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,  
 With numbers near, alas! no company.

When he could creep about, at will, though  
 poor  
 And forced to live on alms, this old Man fed  
 A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door  
 Came not, but in a lane partook his bread.

There, at the root of one particular tree,  
 An easy seat this worn-out Labourer found  
 While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his  
 knee  
 Laid one by one, or scattered on the ground.

Dear intercourse was theirs, day after day;  
 What signs of mutual gladness when they  
 met!  
 Think of their common peace, their simple  
 play,  
 The parting moment and its fond regret.

Months passed in love that failed not to  
 fulfil,  
 In spite of season's change, its own demand,  
 By fluttering pinions here and busy bill;  
 There by caresses from a tremulous hand. 20

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong  
 Was formed between the solitary pair,  
 That when his fate had housed him 'mid a  
 throng  
 The Captive shunned all converse proffered  
 there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead and  
 gone;  
 But, if no evil hap his wishes crossed,  
 One living Stay was left, and on that one  
 Some recompence for all that he had lost.

Oh that the good old Man had power to  
 prove,  
 By message sent through air or visible  
 token,  
 That still he loves the Bird, and still must  
 love;  
 That friendship lasts though fellowship is  
 broken!

"HOW BEAUTIFUL THE QUEEN  
OF NIGHT"

1846(?) 1850

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high  
Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,  
Where, ever and anon, her head she shrouds  
Hidden from view in dense obscurity.  
But look, and to the watchful eye  
A brightening edge will indicate that soon  
We shall behold the struggling Moon  
Break forth, — again to walk the clear blue  
sky.

EVENING VOLUNTARIES

TO LUCCA GIORDANO

1846. 1850

GIORDANO, verily thy Pencil's skill  
Hath here portrayed with Nature's happiest  
grace  
The fair Endymion couched on Latmos-hill;  
And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's face  
In rapture, — yet suspending her embrace,  
As not unconscious with what power the  
thrill  
Of her most timid touch his sleep would  
chase,  
And, with his sleep, that beauty calm and  
still.  
Oh may this work have found its last retreat  
Here in a Mountain-bard's secure abode,  
One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia  
showed  
A face of love which he in love would greet,  
Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky seat;  
Or lured along where greenwood paths he  
trod.

"WHO BUT IS PLEASED TO WATCH THE  
MOON ON HIGH"

1846. 1850

Who but is pleased to watch the moon on  
high  
Travelling where she from time to time en-  
shrouds  
Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty  
Renounces, till among the scattered clouds  
One with its kindling edge declares that  
soon  
Will reappear before the uplifted eye  
A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,

To glide in open prospect through clear  
sky.

Pity that such a promise e'er should prove  
False in the issue, that yon seeming space  
Of sky should be in truth the steadfast face  
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which  
must move  
(By transit not unlike man's frequent doom)  
The Wanderer lost in more determined  
gloom.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND  
NEWSPAPERS

1846. 1850

DISCOURSE was deemed Man's noblest at-  
tribute,  
And written words the glory of his hand;  
Then followed Printing with enlarged com-  
mand  
For thought -- dominion vast and absolute  
For spreading truth, and making love  
expand.  
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute  
Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can  
suit  
The taste of this once-intellectual Land.  
A backward movement surely have we here,  
From manhood, — back to childhood; for  
the age —  
Back towards caverned life's first rude  
career.  
Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!  
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear  
Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower  
stage!

"THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF  
NIGHTLY STREAMS"

1846. 1850

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams  
That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful  
powers,  
If neither soothing to the worm that gleams  
Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed  
in bowers,  
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers, —  
That voice of unpretending harmony  
(For who what is shall measure by what  
seems  
To be, or not to be,  
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)



Wants not a healing influence that can  
 creep  
 Into the human breast, and mix with sleep  
 To regulate the motion of our dreams  
 For kindly issues — as through every clime  
 Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest  
 time;  
 As at this day, the rudest swains who dwell  
 Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling  
 knell  
 Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could  
 tell.

## SONNET

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN

1846. 1850

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time brings  
 forth  
 No successors; and, lodged in memory,  
 If love exist no longer, it must die, —  
 Wanting accustomed food, must pass from  
 earth,  
 Or never hope to reach a second birth  
 This sad belief, the happiest that is left  
 To thousands, share not Thou; how'er  
 bereft,  
 Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a  
 dearth.  
 Though poor and destitute of friends thou  
 art,  
 Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,  
 One to whom Heaven assigns that mourn-  
 ful part  
 The utmost solitude of age to face,  
 Still shall be left some corner of the heart  
 Where Love for living Thing can find a  
 place.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY  
 STREAM

1846. 1849

BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind  
 Crowded with thoughts that need a settled  
 home,  
 Yet, like to eddying balls of foam  
 Within this whirlpool, they each other  
 chase  
 Round and round, and neither find  
 An outlet nor a resting-place!  
 Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,  
 Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

ODE ON THE INSTALLATION OF  
 HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE  
 ALBERT AS CHANCELLOR OF  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF CAM-  
 BRIDGE, JULY 1847

1847. 1847

## INTRODUCTION AND CHORUS

For thirst of power that Heaven dis-  
 owns,  
 For temples, towers, and thrones,  
 Too long insulted by the Spoiler's shock,  
 Indignant Europe cast  
 Her stormy foe at last  
 To reap the whirlwind on a Libyan rock.

## SOLO — (TENOR)

War is passion's basest game  
 Mudly played to win a name;  
 Up starts some tyrant, Earth and Heaven  
 to dare,  
 The servile million bow;  
 But will the lightning glance aside to spare  
 The Despot's laurelled brow?

## CHORUS

War is mercy, glory, fame,  
 Waged in Freedom's holy cause;  
 Freedom, such as Man may claim  
 Under God's restraining laws.  
 Such is Albion's fame and glory:  
 Let rescued Europe tell the story

RECIT. (*accompanied*) — (CONTRALTO)

But lo, what sudden cloud has darkened  
 all  
 The land as with a funeral pall?  
 The Rose of England suffers blight,  
 The flower has drooped, the Isle's delight,  
 Flower and bud together fall —  
 A Nation's hopes lie crushed in Claremont's  
 desolate hall.

## AIR — (SOPRANO)

Time a chequered mantle wears; —  
 Earth awakes from wintry sleep;  
 Again the Tree a blossom bears —  
 Cease, Britannia, cease to weep!  
 Hark to the peals on this bright May morn!  
 They tell that your future Queen is born. 30

## SOPRANO SOLO AND CHORUS

A Guardian Angel fluttered  
 Above the Babe, unseen;

One word he softly uttered —  
 It named the future Queen:  
 And a joyful cry through the Island rang,  
 As clear and bold as the trumpet's clang,  
 As bland as the reed of peace —  
 'VICTORIA be her name !'  
 For righteous triumphs are the base  
 Whereon Britannia rests her peaceful fame.

## QUARTET

Time, in his mantle's sunniest fold, 41  
 Uplifted in his arms the child;  
 And, while the fearless Infant smiled,  
 Her happier destiny foretold: ---  
 " Infancy, by Wisdom mild,  
 Trained to health and artless beauty;  
 Youth, by pleasure unbeguiled  
 From the lore of lofty duty;  
 Womanhood is pure renown,  
 Seated on her lineal throne: 50  
 Leaves of myrtle in her Crown,  
 Fresh with lustre all their own.  
 Love, the treasure worth possessing,  
 More than all the world beside,  
 This shall be her choicest blessing,  
 Oft to royal hearts denied."

RECIT. (*accompanied*) -- (BASS)

That eve, the Star of Brunswick shone  
 With stedfast ray benign  
 On Gotha's ducal roof, and on  
 The softly flowing Leine; 60  
 Nor failed to gild the spires of Bonn,  
 And glittered on the Rhine --  
 Old Camus, too, on that prophetic night  
 Was conscious of the ray;  
 And his willows whispered in its light,  
 Not to the Zephyr's sway,  
 But with a Delphic life, in sight  
 Of this auspicious day:

## CHORUS

This day, when Granta hails her chosen Lord,  
 And proud of her award, 70  
 Confiding in the Star serene,  
 Welcomes the Consort of a happy Queen.

## AIR -- (CONTRALTO)

Prince, in these Collegiate bowers,  
 Where Science, leagued with holier truth,

Guards the sacred heart of youth,  
 Solemn monitors are ours.  
 These reverend aisles, these hallowed  
 towers,  
 Raised by many a hand august,  
 Are haunted by majestic Powers,  
 The memories of the Wise and Just, 80  
 Who, faithful to a pious trust,  
 Here, in the Founder's spirit sought  
 To mould and stamp the ore of thought  
 In that bold form and impress high  
 That best betoken patriot loyalty.  
 Not in vain those Sages taught, ---  
 True disciples, good as great,  
 Have pondered here their country's weal,  
 Weighed the Future by the Past,  
 Learned how social frames may last, 90  
 And how a Land may rule its fate  
 By constancy inviolate,  
 Though worlds to their foundations reel  
 The sport of factious Hate or godless Zeal.

## AIR -- (BASS)

Albert, in thy race we cherish  
 A Nation's strength that will not perish  
 While England's sceptred Line  
 True to the King of Kings is found;  
 Like that Wise ancestor of thine  
 Who threw the Saxon shield o'er Luther's  
 life, 100  
 When first above the yells of bigot strife  
 The trumpet of the Living Word  
 Assumed a voice of deep portentous sound,  
 From gladdened Elbe to startled Tiber  
 heard.

## CHORUS

What shield more sublime  
 E'er was blazoned or sung ?  
 And the PRINCE whom we greet  
 From its Hero is sprung.  
 Resound, resound the strain,  
 That hails him for our own ! 110  
 Again, again, and yet again,  
 For the Church, the State, the Throne !  
 And that Presence fair and bright,  
 Ever blest wherever seen,  
 Who deigns to grace our festal rite,  
 The pride of the Islands, VICTORIA  
 THE QUEEN.

## PREFACE<sup>1</sup>

1800

MUCH the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no prefatory matter, explanatory of any portion of them or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in those Prefaces upon the principles of Poetry in general, they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition.

### PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS"

*Note.* — In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having little of a special application to their contents.

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon

which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems; and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakspeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no

<sup>1</sup> The ideas which were expanded into the following Prefaces and Essays first appeared as a Preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800. In the edition of 1802 the Preface to that of 1800 was enlarged, and there was added an Appendix on "Poetic Diction." These were repeated in successive editions of the poet's works — with alterations, insertions, and omissions — until they received their last revision in the Edition of 1845. — Ed.

doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art in proportion as they separate themselves from the

sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived, but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affection strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without

<sup>1</sup> It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakspeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. — When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of

flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style, which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject; consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense; but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition,

and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;  
The birds in vain their amorous descent join,  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.  
These eais, alas! for other notes repaire;  
*A different object do these eyes require;*  
*My lonely anguish melts no heat but mine;*  
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;*  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,  
To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
*I fruitless moun to him that cannot hear,*  
*And weep the more because I weep in vain."*

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry<sup>1</sup> sheds no tears "such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as

<sup>1</sup> I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact.

Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis, because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments; for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever be the language outwardly held by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgements concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgements will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him? — He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in

the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than any other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which his fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable

by him; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry, as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathise with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an

infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labour and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Enthusiastically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakspeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge — it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no

more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. — It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general, but especially to those parts of compositions where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorise the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are coloured by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons,



with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the plea-

sure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly under-rate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found

in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful parts of "Clarrissa Harlowe," or the "Gamester"; while Shakspeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement. — On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions

whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an over-balance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author

is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:—

"I put my hat upon my head  
And walked into the Strand,  
And there I met another man  
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the "Babes in the Wood."

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand  
Went wandering up and down,  
But never more they saw the Man  
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would

decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but to such and such classes of people it will appear *men* or *ludicrous*! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order

entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind,

as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining: and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

## APPENDIX

1802

See page 796 — "by what is usually called POETIC DICTION."

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal, without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase poetic diction has been used; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and Men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The Reader or Hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind: when affected by the genuine language of passion he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language

was received with admiration; and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterised by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men, language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors; they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever

took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language, and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is *balked* of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers, both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction* than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue," etc. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," etc. 1st Corinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr. Johnson:—

"Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,  
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;  
No stern command, no monitory voice,  
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;  
Yet, timely provident, she hastens away  
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day.  
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,  
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.  
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,  
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers?  
While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,  
And soft solicitation courts repose,  
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,  
Year chases year with unremitted flight,  
Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,  
Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe."

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider

her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

"Religion! what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word!  
More precious than silver and gold,  
Or all that this earth can afford.  
But the sound of the church-going bell  
These valleys and rocks never heard,  
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,  
Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,  
Convey to this desolate shore  
Some cordial endearing report  
Of a land I must visit no more.  
My Friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me?  
O tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see."

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some Critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines "Ne'er sighed at the sound," etc., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said, — namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

DEDICATION

PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815

TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,  
BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection — as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim, — for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander

with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood. — Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself — to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil, may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life.

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
February 1, 1815.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description, — *i. e.* the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer: whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2dly, Sensibility, — which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface.) 3dly, Reflection, — which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy, — to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention, — by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted

to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment, — to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.<sup>2</sup>

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative, — including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, "*Arma virumque cado*;" but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the *Iliad* or the "*Paradise*

<sup>1</sup> The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

<sup>2</sup> As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendants upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon those requisites.

Lost" would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale; — so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2dly, The Dramatic, — consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3dly, The Lyrical — containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium, — descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the "Seasons" of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's "Schoolmistress," "The Cotter's Saturday Night" of Burns, the "Two Dogs" of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the "Allegro" and "Penseroso" of Milton, Beattie's "Minstrel," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic, — the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the "Georgics" of Virgil, "The Fleece" of Dyer, Mason's "English Garden," etc.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's "Night Thoughts," and Cowper's "Task," are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing

with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versâ*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded on the Affections;" as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other Classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre. with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible, — the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification, — as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem; — in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the

true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman ;

"He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own."

Let us come now to the consideration of the words *Fancy* and *Imagination*, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. "A man," says an intelligent author, "has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense : it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φαντασμεν* is to cause to appear), so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation ; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterised. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced." — *British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and bestow intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure ? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology ; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images ; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them : each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is "all compact ;" he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape ; or what is left to characterise *Fancy*, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity ? — Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects ; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws ; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats : —

"Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro  
Dumosa pendere procul de rupe videbo."

—— "half way down  
*Hangs* one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakspeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word : neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally *hang*, as does the parrot or the monkey ; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

"As when far off at sea a fleet descried  
*Hangs* in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring  
Their spicy drugs, they on the trading flood  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
Fly, stemming nightly toward the Pole : so seemed  
Far off the flying *Friend*."

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image : First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters ; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound ; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes : —

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods,"  
of the same bird,

"His voice was buried among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze ;"

"O, Cuckoo ! shall I call thee *Bird*,  
Or but a wandering *Voice* ?"

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird ; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. "His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of seclusion by which this Bird is marked ; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade ; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in



which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

"Shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the slaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

"As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,  
Wonder to all who do the same espy  
By what means it could thither come, and whence,  
So that it seems a thing endued with sense,  
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf  
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun himself.

Such seemed this Man; not all alive or dead,  
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.

Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,  
And moveth altogether if it move at all."

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite

and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power; but the Imagination also shapes and creates; and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—alternations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced "Sailing from Bengala," "They," i. e. the "merchants," representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "ply" their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: "So" (referring to the word "As" in the commencement) "seemed the flying Fiend;" the image of his Person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. "So seemed," and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet's mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

"Modo me Thebis, modo ponti Athenis."

Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,

"Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints  
He onward came, far off his coming shone,"—

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction "His coming"!

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, "draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one colour and serve to one effect."<sup>1</sup> The grand storehouses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the

<sup>1</sup> Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations, — of which his character of *Una* is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakspeare are an inexhaustible source.

"I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,  
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you Daughters!"

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention, yet justified by recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given in these unfavourable times evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterised as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, "the aggregative and associative power," my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different, or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

"In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman."

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as

Pompey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas; — because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, "His stature reached the sky!" the illimitable firmament!

— When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows — and continues to grow — upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding than upon inherent and internal properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other. — The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion; — the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished. — Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal. — Yet it is not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples. — Referring the Reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost*: —

"The dew of the evening most carefully shun,  
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

"Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "A palsied king," and yet a military monarch, advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

— "a magazine  
Of sovereign juice is cellared in:  
Liquor that will the siege maintain  
Should Phoebus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

"'Tis that, that gives the poet rage,  
And thaws the gelly'd blood of age;

Matures the young, restores the old,  
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;  
. . . . .

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar,

Whilst we together jovial sit  
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit,  
Where, though bleak winds confine us home,  
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the Friends we know,  
And drink to all worth drinking to;  
When having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want healths than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply  
Our friendships with our charity;  
Men that remote in sorrows live,  
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
The afflicted into joy; th' oppress  
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,  
The lovers shall have mistresses,  
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,  
And the neglected Poet, bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,  
Whilst we ourselves do all we would,  
For, freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are?"

When I sat down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

## ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE

1815

WITH the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself; — the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation, while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons re-

sort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended as a study.

Into the above classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended

upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science), her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the

heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have left.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the most tasteful beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i. e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's

language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they received from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book. — To these excesses they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious; and at all seasons they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity: — the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence, and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an “imperfect shadowing forth” of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion — making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry — passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion — whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry — ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error; — so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute

value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?

Among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trustworthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mistaught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no error is so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men, who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany, — confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily “into the region;” — men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives; — judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits, must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when Authors shall have at

length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes; - a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the "Creation" of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the "Faery Queen" faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

"The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors  
And poets sage" —

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy: while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted; but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius is, that he could turn to such

glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him.<sup>1</sup>— His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their bouffon de Shakspeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet — for among us it is a current, I might say an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakspeare expresses

<sup>1</sup> The Learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bartsa, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an<sup>1</sup> act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them: and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—"there sitting where he durst not soar."

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide, nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the "Paradise Lost" made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "just to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncom-

mon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few, I fear, would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase; "for," says Dr. Johnson, "many more readers" (he means persons in the habit of reading poetry) "than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, fourth edition, 1686; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know; but I well remember that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man; but merely to show that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the "Paradise Lost" were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the Work were sold in eleven years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1661, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the Works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand Copies; facts adduced by the Critic to prove the "paucity of Readers."—There were readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm that the reception of the "Paradise Lost," and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous.<sup>1</sup>—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, everywhere impregnated with original excellence.

<sup>1</sup> This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

<sup>1</sup> Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of 'Paradise Lost' that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles<sup>1</sup> in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are throughout equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his life-time, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise which these compositions obtained tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues, which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded." The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the "Paradise Lost" appeared Thomson's "Winter;" which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received?

<sup>1</sup> This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

"It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal "Reverie of Lady Winchilsea," and a passage or two in the "Windsor Forest" of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the "Paradise Lost" and the "Seasons" does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden,

<sup>1</sup> *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead;  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.  
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat:  
Even Lust and Envy sleep; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

DRYDEN'S *Indian Emperor*.



once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity!—If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time held in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was in *such good condition* at the time of the publication of the “Seasons,” the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little more; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is the rest to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental commonplaces that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the “Seasons” the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are the parts of his Work which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him “an elegant and philosophical Poet;” nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson’s genius as an imaginative poet<sup>1</sup> were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the

publication of the “Seasons,” pointed them out by a note in his *Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope*. In the “Castle of Indolence” (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet’s remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and throw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the “Seasons” of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, ‘mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating or imitating these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his “Seasons,” and find that even that does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

<sup>1</sup> Shenstone, in his “Schoolmistress,” gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first

with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave in his hearing a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the finesensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

"Now days were gone, and night was come,  
And all were fast asleep,  
All save the Lady Emeline,  
Who sat in her bowrs to weep:  
And soon she heard her true Love's voice  
Low whispering at the walle,  
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,  
'Tis I thy true-love call."

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :

"Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal  
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,  
Und Hochburgs Lampen überall  
Schon ausgeblinnet hatten,  
Und alles tief einschlafen war;  
Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,  
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,  
Und seinen Ritter dachte:  
Da horch! Ein süßer Liebeston  
Kam leis' empor geflogen  
'Ho, Trudchen, ho! Da bin ich schon!  
Frisch auf! Dich angezogen!'"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the *Reliques* had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance!—Open this far-famed Book!—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight Books, presents itself. "The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a

appearance (see D'Israeli's 2d series of the *Curiosities of Literature*) the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds." Precious memorandums from the pocketbook of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. --- Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steep of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes;—of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.--- Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his "ands" and his "buts!" and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fingalian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own. — It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland; — a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them — except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saron Poems*, — counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless. — Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the *Reliques* of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!

I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the *Reliques*; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces, biographical and critical, for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the first name we find is that of Cowley! — What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer? where is Spenser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated, — where Shakspeare? — These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at

any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt — Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates — metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these *Volumes*? — The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given; and as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely different in value; — they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this, — that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them; — and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to

clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does not lie here. — *TASTE*, I would remind the reader, like *IMAGINATION*, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not passive*, — to intellectual *acts and operations*. The word *Imagination* has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of *Taste*, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy, — which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word *Imagination*; but the word *Taste* has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a *passive* faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office; — for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime; — are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor — *Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of

a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact that, in popular language, to be in a passion is to be angry! — But,

“Anger in hasty words or blows  
Itself discharges on its foes.”

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid, — and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer at his first appearance in the world. — Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general — stretched on his palanquin, and borne by slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspired by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and there lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others that are complex and revolutionary; some to which the heart yields with gentleness; others

against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic as well as an ordinary sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself — but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime, — if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular* applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell! The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in everything which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power; wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future; there, the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers. — Grand thoughts (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth), as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing that there never has been a period, and perhaps

never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty, — with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said above that, of good poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

“— Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge —”  
MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry — transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is anything of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the *PUBLIC*, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the *PEOPLE*. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to; but to the People, philosophically characterised, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the “Vision and the Faculty divine”; and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction — from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

## POSTSCRIPT

1835

In the present Volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings given vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those notices are left to produce their own effect; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society: in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world; but I feel that in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader, will dispose him to receive more readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

I. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other, great scheme of civil polity separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners: but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the principle nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it? If this be so, persons will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail, — an attempt which would be quite out of place here; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilised humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft or violence.

And here, as, in the Report of the Commissioners, the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their "remedial measures" obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a christian government, standing *in loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance involves the protection of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeoparding of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public support when

from any cause they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the "Paradise Lost," Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul —

"Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay  
To mould me man, did I solicit Thee  
From darkness to promote me?  
Concurred not to my being."

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessities of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in circumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms even they who have been imprudent and undeserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic

calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succour from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woful is the condition of the famished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance-passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down by his rifle-gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance, watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavours to extract it from the inexorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that which is so often endured in civilised society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said: —

"Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food."

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavours to find work *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the labourer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing, and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labour of the arms, the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here maintained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political econ-

omy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged, — refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish through a conviction of an absolute necessity for greater forethought and more prudent care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in a much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained, and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be. For it has been invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, viz. the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbours will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labour, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who, through the space of four years, had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment: — the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rendering to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an unwarrantable pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples, where the spirit of independence works with equal strength, though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honour may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severities which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind: while

some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a "refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat." Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless, and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss what remains to him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of parliament have approved of and supported it, it may be said that it proceeds too much upon the presumption that it is a labouring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labour, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labour, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence that those who have been prompt to assist others, will not be left destitute, should they themselves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in common with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthier of that gift: in other words, not to degrade but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without adverting to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly enlogised, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be



maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer than one guilty escape: in France there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history and of works of fiction we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the

scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle which has been here defended should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But, after all, there may be a little reason to apprehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the labouring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labour, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject, and to establish a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labour would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable, they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly*: for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavourable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-shifting population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosperous who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending

the influence of that Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up, and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition, could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it: let not time be wasted in profitless regrets; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of union in the wish to save the limited monarchy and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered for so long a period of time this country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life: but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the labouring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change in that department. The clamour would be entitled to more respect if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of some-

thing fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that, therefore, we have experience on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

"Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish," is a favourite cry; but, without adverting to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its indiscriminate adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly-peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the bench, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness; while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining incumbent will be revived, by being in near com-

munion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money that in his new situation he is apt to fall unawares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent, whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world,—that spirit and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England much more is required, both in large towns and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to sup-

port the truths of Christianity and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalising church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realised, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down; surely not only opportunities for obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonour of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and repinings are engendered everywhere, by imputations being cast upon the government, and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humours, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks; he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good at least, is generally acceptable, but what we believe can be traced to preconceived intention and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that

"In the unreasoning progress of the world  
A wiser spirit is at work for us,  
A better eye than ours." MS.

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but our sphere of duty is upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is as apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation know what good their ancestors derived from their church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency of theological learning among the clergy of that church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear; that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be everywhere impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this "tinge of secularity" is no reproach to the clergy, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honourable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a boy or youth, with such a prospect before him, should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations, will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy of that Gospel, the lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he

is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy, and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded: the emoluments, howsoever reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy; notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of that order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifices in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved, take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily? Will they pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are! Not more absurd would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket-money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a few years since, contained not more than one church and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels of every denomination were still more scantily found there; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people? Who shall dare to say so? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask, what kind of religion? wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establish-

ment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous; but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much overrate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated or too much impeded by legal obstacles: these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finical taste, nor by cutting off this or that from her articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtilty had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or com-

pelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals, acting in their private capacities, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. Is it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry?

Moreover, the force of public opinion is rapidly increasing, and some may bend to it, who are not so happy as to be swayed by a higher motive; especially they who derive large incomes from lay-impropriations in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their superb habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast estates which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favouritism or purchased at insignificant prices after church-spoliation; such proprietors, though not conscience-stricken (there is no call for that), may be prompted to make a return for which their tenantry and dependents will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given; an accession of means from these several sources, co-operating with a well-considered change in the distribution of some parts of the property at present possessed by the church, a change scrupulously founded upon due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends desire, that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a layman to have treated at length a subject with which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may, without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all; nor need an apology be offered for going over ground which has been trod before so ably and so often: without pretending, however, to anything of novelty, either in matter or manner, something may have been offered to view which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labour but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my MSS. written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. It has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political or trade-unions; but if a single workman—who, being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave—should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice, and little would I care for losing credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political philo-

sophy or public measures, if the sober-minded admit that, in general views, my affections have been moved, and my imagination exercised, under and *for* the guidance of reason.

"Here might I pause, and bend in reverence  
To Nature, and the power of human minds;  
To men as they are men within themselves.  
How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in show;  
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
But a mere mountain chapel that protects  
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower!  
Of these, said I, shall be my song, of these,  
If future years mature me for the task,  
Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things — in truth  
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
Where it is due. Thus haply shall I teach,  
Inspire, through unadulterated ears  
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope; my theme  
No other than the very heart of man,  
As found among the best of those who live,  
Not unexalted by religious faith,  
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,  
In Nature's presence: thence may I select  
Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,  
And miserable love that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds

Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.  
Be mine to follow with no timid step  
Where knowledge leads me; it shall be my pride  
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,  
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,  
M utter not lightly to be heard by those  
Who to the letter of the outward promise  
Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the world  
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then  
Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired.  
Men may be found of other mould than these;  
Who are their own upholders, to themselves  
Encouragement and energy, and will;  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words  
As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are, among the walks of homely life,  
Still higher, men for contemplation framed;  
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;  
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink  
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.  
Thence is the language of the heavens, the power,  
The thought, the image, and the silent joy:  
Words are but under-agents in their souls;  
When they are grasping with their greatest strength  
They do not breathe among them; this I speak  
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts  
For his own service, knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world."

## NOTES

1785

### Page 1. LINES WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT HAWKSHEAD.

The great teachers of our time insist that the first movements in the evolutionary processes must be read in the light of all that follow. So it is in the study of the works of a great poet; after becoming familiar with all the stages of his art we return to the first and elemental stage and view it in the light of all that followed. The early poems of Wordsworth have a singular interest when thus considered, although in themselves they may be quite insignificant. We must remember it was at Hawkshead that this shy, awkward Cumberland lad came under influences which were the most vital in forming his poetic ideas. In the old Edward VI. School, founded by Archbishop Sandys of York in 1588, he had revealed to him something of the dignity, beauty, and catholicity of learning. The statutes provided that "there shall be a perpetual free school, to be called the free grammar school of Edwyne Sandys, for teaching grammar and the principles of the Greek tongue, with other sciences necessary to be taught in the school, freely, without taking any stipend, wages, or other exactions from the scholars resorting to the said school for learning."

While this and the two following Hawkshead School poems are billowy in feeling and mechanical in form, as are those of Coleridge written at the same time at Christ's Hospital, yet they are full of the spirit which in time will create its own purity and strength of language, sanity of thought and feeling. They are an expression of what came to him unconsciously in those days, as the early books of "The Prelude" are of what came to him unconsciously.

1787-9

### Page 3. AN EVENING WALK.

This poem was begun in his first college vacation, the events of which are revealed in "The Prelude," iv. It was continued on the second vacation spent with his sister and Mary Hutchinson at Penrith, and completed on his return to Cambridge. As given to the press in 1793, it contained many passages from his various poems written at Hawkshead. Its present form is the work of years between 1793 and 1836.

This was the first poem that Wordsworth published, and his own note to it reveals why it was that he defined poetry, his poetry at least, as "emotion recollected in tranquillity." He did not give voice to his feelings at the

time of experiencing them, but treasured them for future use. In this way he avoided the error of Byron, but at the same time laid himself open to the charge of lacking passion. Here, too, the lover of Wordsworth who cares to identify places referred to in his works finds that he must keep in mind Wordsworth's criticism of those poets who go into the presence of nature with pencil and note-book. He says: "Nature does not permit an unveiling to be made of her charms! He should have left his pencil and note-book at home; fixed his eye as he walked with a reverent attention on all that surrounded him, and taken all into his heart that he could understand and enjoy. Afterwards he would have discovered that while much of what he had admired was preserved to him, much was also most wisely obliterated. That which remained, the picture surviving in his mind, would have presented the ideal and essential touch of the scene, and done so in large part by discarding much which, though in itself striking, was not characteristic. In every scene, many of the most brilliant details are but accidental."

Topographical notes are necessary in reading such a poet as Wordsworth, as every hill and vale, tarn and lake, highroad and bypath, grove or forest in the lake land is imperishably associated with his work; but we must bring with us an imagination trained by long reading of his poetry in order to localize and not materialize too sordidly the scenes, for

"From worlds not quickened by the sun,  
A portion of the gift is won.  
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread  
On ground which British shepherds tread."

Although these early poems are full of affection in form, a study of them in the localities to which they refer will reveal what is fundamental in all his works: a fine perception of the varying aspects of Nature as revealed to the eye; an exquisitely quick sensitiveness to the sounds of Nature in her quiet moods; and a meditative pathos which carried him to the heart of the scene before him. There is vigor of feeling in this poem which is of youth, and peace of feeling which is mature.

On the publication of "An Evening Walk," Dorothy Wordsworth writes to a friend: "There are some glaring faults, but I hope you will discover many beauties, which could only have been created by the imagination of a poet."

Mr. E. Legouis thinks that the excess of faults which appear in these early poems will account for the excess in the poet's reformation — his theory and practice.

Line 9. *Winander sleeps.* These lines are

only applicable to the middle part of that lake. W. W.

Line 20. *woodcocks roamed*. In the beginning of the winter, these mountains are frequented by woodcocks. W. W.

Line 49. *intake*. The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain enclosure. W. W.

Line 54. *ghyll*. Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country: *ghyll* and *dingle* have the same meaning. W. W.

Line 68. *secret bridge*. The reader who has made a tour of this country, will recognize, in this description, the features which characterize the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal. W. W.

Line 133. '*green rings*.' "Vivid rings of green."—Greenwood's *Poems on Shooting*. W. W.

Line 146. *Sweetly ferocious*. "Dolcemente feroce."—TASSO.

In this description of the cock, I remembered a spirited one of the same animal in *L'Agriculture, ou Les Georgiques Français*, of M. Bossuet. W. W.

Line 191. *Gives one bright glance*, etc. From Thomson. W. W.

Line 207. *Winding in ordered pomp*. See a description of an appearance of this kind in Clark's *Survey of the Lakes*, accompanied by vouchers of its veracity, that may amuse the reader. W. W.

1789

#### PAGE 9. REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS.

Line 14. *Who murmuring here a later ditty*. Collins's "Ode on the Death of Thomson," the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his lifetime. This Ode is also alluded to in the next Stanza. W. W.

1791-2

#### PAGE 10. DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES.

Wordsworth's third college summer holidays, 1790, were spent with a fellow-student, Robert Jones, in traveling on foot through France and Switzerland. The mighty impulse of the French Revolution and the glories of Alpine scenery together roused the poet in his nature. Returning to Cambridge, he took his degree in January, 1791, after which he spent some time with his sister at Forncett Rectory, then went to London, and early in 1791 he again visited France. He was at work now upon "Sketches" of his Swiss travels with Jones, and in 1793, when with his sister at Forncett, he published them, together with "An Evening Walk." The detailed history of these years is given in "The Prelude," vi.-x. Coleridge, during his last year in college, before he met Wordsworth, chanced upon these "Sketches" and at once pronounced this remarkable critical judgment, "Seldom, if ever, was the emergence of a great and original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced."

Line 32. *Memnon's lyre*. The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or

cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays. W. W.

Line 70. *The Cross*. Alluding to the crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks of the Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible. W. W.

Line 72. *streams of Life and Death*. Names of rivers at the Chartreuse. W. W.

Line 75. *Vallombre*. Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse. W. W.

Line 137. *her waters gleam*. The river along whose banks you descend in crossing the Alps by the Simplon Pass. W. W.

Line 200. *cells*. The Catholic religion prevails here: these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like the Roman tombs, along the roadside. W. W.

Line 202. *death-cross*. Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow, and other accidents, are very common along this dreadful road. W. W.

Line 214. *wood-cottages*. The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all built of wood. W. W.

Line 307. *Through vacant worlds*, etc. For most of the images in the next sixteen verses, I am indebted to M. Raymond's interesting observations annexed to his translation of Coxe's *Tour in Switzerland*. W. W.

Line 339. *pensive Underwalden's pastoral heights*. The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps; this, if true, may proceed from their being more secluded. W. W.

Line 348. *chalets*, etc. This picture is from the middle region of the Alps. *Châlets* are summer huts for the Swiss herdsmen. W. W.

Line 350. *sugh*. *Sugh*, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees. W. W.

Line 452. *few in arms*, etc. Alluding to several battles which the Swiss in very small numbers have gained over their oppressors, the house of Austria; and in particular to one fought at Naeffels, near Glarus, where three hundred and fifty men are said to have defeated an army of between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the valley are to be found eleven stones, with this inscription, 1388, the year the battle was fought, marking out, as I was told upon the spot, the several places where the Austrians, attempting to make a stand, were repulsed anew. W. W.

Line 472. *Pikes, of darkness*. As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror: Wetter-Horn, the pike of storms, etc., etc. W. W.

Line 527. *Bows his young head*, etc. The well-known effect of the famous air called in France "*Ranz des Vaches*," upon the Swiss troops. W. W.

Line 546. *Einsiedlen's wretched fane*. This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions. W. W.



Line 560. *The fountains.* Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain. W. W.

Line 619. *Sourd.* An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire. W. W.

Line 636. *majestic course,* etc. The duties upon many parts of the French rivers were so exorbitant that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land. W. W.

## 1791-4

Page 19. GUILT AND SORROW.

After the publication of the two little quartos, "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches," 1793, Wordsworth went to the Isle of Wight with his friend, William Calvert of Windybrow, Keswick. They drove through the New Forest to Salisbury, but their carriage breaking down, Calvert went north on horseback, while Wordsworth walked through South Wales via Bristol, and visited his friend Jones. He spent several days wandering on Salisbury Plain, visiting the valley of the Wye and Goodrich Castle, which gave him material for two other poems: "We are Seven" and "Tintern Abbey."

"Stanzas xxii. xxiv. and xxxviii.-xl. were published in 1798 under title of 'Female Vagrant.'" — E. DOWDEN.

Line 81. *And, hovering round it often did a raven fly.* From a short MS. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young. W. W.

## 1795

Page 31. LINES LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE.

After the experiences sketched in the previous poem, Wordsworth returned to Keswick and lived with the Speddings for a time, then joined Dorothy at Mill House, Halifax. He was in suspense as to what his future would be. His relatives were getting anxious for him to do some definite work. Dorothy and he, in 1794, traveled from Halifax to Keswick, Cockermouth, and Whitehaven, returning to the farm at Windybrow, loaned him by William Calvert. Dorothy writes of these days at the "farm": "Our breakfast and our supper are of milk and potatoes, and we drink no tea." Here he writes of the reception of his first poems, "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches": "As I had done nothing by which to distinguish myself at the University, I thought these little things might show that I could do something. They have been treated with unmerited contempt by some of the periodicals, and others have spoken in higher terms of them than they deserve." During this year he changed his ideas in regard to the

French Revolution, as may be seen in "The Prelude," xi. He projected a monthly magazine, but no publisher could be found. In the mean time Calvert's brother, Raisley, became ill and Wordsworth attended him until his death, when it was found that in his will he had left Wordsworth £900. This was sufficient to provide the shade in which he might grow ripe, and the leisure in which to grow wise. The sonnet to the memory of Raisley Calvert, together with the allusion to him in "The Prelude," xiv., reveal the significance of this noble act. It was now possible for Wordsworth to live with his sister, whose unselfish devotion and marvelous insight, born of love, became such a force in his life. They settled at Racedown in Dorsetshire.

The old farmhouse on the slope of Blackdown, beautiful for prospect of hill, forest, sun and sky, remains essentially as in Wordsworth's day, and well repays one for a few days' wandering. Dorothy often spoke of it later in life as "the place dearest to my recollections upon the whole surface of the island; it was the first home I had." It is not surprising, therefore, that the first poem written here, through emotion recollected in solitude, should reveal the elements of the genius and passion, as well as the wisdom and truth which were to constitute Wordsworth's essential gift to English poetry. This poem connects the new act in his life with the earlier happy time at Hawkshead.

Line 1. The yew-tree was on the eastern side of the lake, about ten minutes' walk from the village.

Line 12. The individual spoken of was educated at the university, and was a man of talent and learning. W. W.

## 1795-6

Page 33. THE BORDERERS.

The years 1796-7 are eventful in the history of English literature. By a remarkable coincidence, Coleridge, who had but recently married, was giving to the world a slender volume of poems, and was preparing to settle at Nether Stowey. On hearing that the author of "Descriptive Sketches" was not far away, he took the first opportunity of visiting him. Of this visit Dorothy writes: "The first thing that was read on that occasion was 'The Ruined Cottage' [now the first book of "The Excursion"], with which Coleridge was so much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy 'Osorio.' The next morning William read his tragedy 'The Borderers.'"

"The Borderers" was born out of the Reign of Terror, and Oswald, like the actors in the terrible tragedy, kills an innocent man in the belief that he is punishing a guilty one." — E. LEAGOUS.

Wordsworth is here revealed in the depths of moral despondency, and in "The Ruined Cottage" as restored to health.

"This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in its

title-page, was composed in 1795-96. It lay nearly from that time till within the last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth; that as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory that the Tragedy of 'The Borderers' was composed." W. W.

## 1797

## Page 70. THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

In the edition of 1800 the following was added to the poem:—

'Poor Outcast! return, to receive thee once more  
The house of thy Father will open its door,  
And then once again, in thy plain russet gown,  
May'st hear the thrush sing from a tree of its own.'

## 1798

## Page 71. WE ARE SEVEN.

A new era in the history of English literature began with this first meeting of Wordsworth and Coleridge at Racedown, for then it was that the epoch-making volume, the *Lyrical Ballads*, had its origin. William and Dorothy returned this visit soon, and, concluding that thirty miles was too far for daily walks, they decided to leave Racedown and settle at Alfoxden. Alfoxden was a large mansion, beautifully located on a slope of the Quantock Hills, in sight of Bristol Channel. Woods of old oaks and large hollies, with abundant fern and foxglove, stretch in every direction, broken here and there by pleasant downs and valleys through which the brooks run singing to the sea. Dorothy wrote: "The deer dwell here, and the sheep, so that we have a lively prospect; walks extend for miles over the hills-top." This was the poet's spring-time of energy and imaginative insight. The visitor of to-day will find the country but little changed from what it was when she described it. The

student of these poets should not fail to visit the Quantocks with their wealth of romantic loveliness which called forth such outbursts of poetical enthusiasm in that *annus mirabilis* of the two poets.

At each of three critical periods in the world's history mankind has learned its wisest lessons by gazing into the face of the child. In the early days of Christianity the spirit by which the new revelation was to be grasped was that of the child; at the breaking up of the Middle Ages modern life again breathed its highest conceptions of art in the person of a child; and in our own day, through the influence of this little poem, and others of like nature, Wordsworth flashed the great truths anew and asked "What intimations of life eternal are here?"

## Page 73. ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS.

Much has been made of Wordsworth's limitations. The most devoted Wordsworthians admit his lack of dramatic power, his weakness in creation of character, and in evolution of narrative,—and that he lacked humor; yet they insist that these very limitations must be considered in estimating his essential greatness.

The moral reflections with which the poem concludes are quite unlike the homiletics of the didactic school.

## Page 81. LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

In the unambitious loveliness of this little poem and that which follows is revealed that conception of Nature—the most original of all those which Wordsworth added to English poetry—as having its own peculiar life, an infinite activity of giving and receiving love and joy in itself, but also in the association of man. This life is none other than the Spirit of God consciously active in all parts, as well as in the individual whole which we call Nature. This idea reaches sublime heights in all his characteristic work, and becomes a protest against any mechanical theory of the Universe.

Lines 21-24. "This is the only immediate complaint breathed by Wordsworth's poetry, and it must be admitted that even here sorrow for mankind is outweighed by joy in nature."—E. LEGGERS.

This doll remains essentially as in the poet's time, and will repay a visit. It is now known as Wordsworth's Glen.

## Page 83. EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

In this and the poem which follows we have Wordsworth's protest against a mechanical conception of education. He knows that it is only in love and humility, "in a wise passiveness," that our essential selves, "What Is," meets and responds to the essential life in nature and art. The eye sees and the ear hears the life of things, the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge, only when man is potentially soul. When the physical and the intellectual are wedded to the spiritual in love and holy passion, the poetic

imagination is created — the supreme intellectual faculty.

**Page 91. LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY.**

The early months of 1798 were spent in arranging for the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, when the lease of Alfoxden expired. Wordsworth did not ask for a renewal of the lease, as he was planning a visit to Germany in order to study the language. It is evident from Coleridge's letters at this time that after the advent of the Revolutionist, Thelwall, some suspicions grew up in regard to the character of the three which reflected upon Thomas Poole, the patron both of Coleridge and Wordsworth. It is certain that a government spy was sent to watch their movements. In June the Wordsworths left Alfoxden, and after spending a week with Coleridge, visiting Cottle at Bristol to arrange details of bringing out the *Lyrical Ballads*, they took the ramble on the Wye out of which grew this poem, which more than any yet written by him reveals the mastery of all the elements that go to make a work of art; thought, feeling, will, are fused by impassioned contemplation; it is the triumph of imagination contemplative. In purity and dignity of diction, in strength and majesty of conception, in richness and delicacy of imaginative insight, it is not surpassed by Shakespeare or Milton; while in its revelation of the recesses of man's being it moves in a region quite apart from anything yet written in English poetry.

The *Lyrical Ballads* were issued anonymously in September. The volume contained four poems by Coleridge and nineteen by Wordsworth. The first poem was the "Ancient Mariner" and the last "Tintern Abbey."

The great truths which the poet here reveals through the poetic imagination have at last been affirmed by modern science, and the best commentary on them is to be found in John Fiske's *Through Nature to God*, where the reality of the Unseen Universe is so splendidly set forth. He says: "We have at length reached a stage where it is becoming daily more and more apparent that with the deeper study of Nature the old strife between faith and knowledge is drawing to a close; and disentangled at last from that ancient slough of despond the Human Mind will breathe a freer air and enjoy a vastly extended horizon."

Line 4. *inland murmur*. The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern. W. W.

Line 97. Tennyson called this almost the grandest line in the English language, giving the sense of the abiding in the transient.

**Page 93. THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.** Here, as in "The Excursion," Wordsworth is using material gathered from his Hawkshead experiences.

The "Growth of a Poet's Mind" as Wordsworth has revealed it to us in "The Prelude" shows the means which Nature used to educate

him into the poet of humanity. Humble men and women, the village dames, the thrifty dalesmen, and the hardy shepherds —

"Of these, said I, shall be my song, of these  
Will I record the praises,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
Where it is due."

For this work his early associations and the inspiration of the great Peasant Poet of Scotland had predisposed him.

In order to see what a giant stride these poems took in advance of the age, we need to compare them with the poems which preceded. Of man as found in the abodes of wealth and refinement, preceding poetry had been mindful; and Wordsworth was too broad not to recognize that from hence had proceeded much that was pure and unworldly, yet he believed that rich veins of poetic feeling lay hidden in the lives of homely men and women. This was, as Frederick Robertson says, a "high and holy work," and for it both the rich and the poor praise him.

Lines 1-66. Plain imagination and severe could hardly produce a more distinct picture of one who, to the eye of the economist, had outlived all usefulness.

"Wordsworth's is the poetry of intellect and of feeling — of humanity in the abstracts chiefly; and yet what is more human than 'The Old Cumberland Beggar'?" — DR. JOHN BROWN.

Lines 67-87. See note on "Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree."

**Page 96. ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.**

"In the edition of 1798 this Poem was called 'Old Man travelling; animal tranquillity and decay.'" — KNIGHT.

**Page 96. PETER BELL. A TALE.**

One of the most interesting studies of this poem, so often the subject of critical sarcasm, is that of Mr. Walter Raleigh, in his work on Wordsworth, London, 1903. Mr. Raleigh calls "Peter Bell" Wordsworth's "Ancient Mariner."

PART FIRST. Line 11. *A Potter*. In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthenware is thus designated. W. W.

Those who have passed by "Peter Bell" with a contemptuous smile may be surprised at the following in Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 222: "To the great veteran poet of the time Mr. Gladstone's fidelity was unchanging, even down to compositions that the ordinary Wordsworthian gives up:

"Read aloud Wordsworth's 'Cumberland Beggar' and 'Peter Bell.' The former is generally acknowledged to be a noble poem, the same justice is not done to the latter; I was more than ever struck with the vivid power of the descriptions, the strong touches of feeling, the skill and order with which the plot upon Peter's conscience is arranged, and the depth of interest which is made to attach to the humblest of

quadrupeds. It must have cost great labour, and is an extraordinary poem both as a whole and in detail."

It is interesting to note that the twofold aspect of the Quantocks is to be found in the poems of Coleridge and Wordsworth. To Coleridge we look for the poetical presentation of the landscape of the Quantocks, the loveliness of dell and comb, the glorious prospects of wide-spreading woods and the loud sounding sea; and to Wordsworth for a corresponding rendering of the life of the inhabitants of the district, cottages, toilers in the field and shepherds in the hills.

1799

Page 109. THE SIMPLON PASS.

Wordsworth, Dorothy, and Coleridge left England on the 16th of September, 1798, before the critics had time to level their guns on the frail craft of the *Lyrical Ballads*. On arriving in Germany they received this cheerful news from Mrs. Coleridge: "The *Lyrical Ballads* are not liked at all by any." Coleridge soon left the Wordsworths to study the German language, literature, and philosophy at Ratzeburg and Göttingen, and they settled down for the winter in the old imperial town of Goslar, at the foot of the Hartz Mountains. Here in the coldest winter of the century, — with little of that harmony without which had evolved the *Lyrical Ballads*, — recollections of Hawkshead and Stowey again aroused the harmony within.

This poem will be found in the sixth book of "The Prelude." It was first published in the collected edition, 1843. It refers to Wordsworth's first visit to Switzerland in 1790.

Page 110. INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS.

This picture of school life at Hawkshead was afterwards incorporated in the first book of "The Prelude."

Page 111. THERE WAS A BOY.

First published in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800.

This passage is found in the fifth book of "The Prelude." Wordsworth sent these lines to Coleridge, who wrote from Ratzeburg of them: "That —

uncertain heaven received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

I should have recognized anywhere; and had I met these lines running wild in the deserts of Arabia, I should have instantly screamed out, 'Wordsworth!'

Page 111. NOTHING.

It is not difficult for the visitor at Hawkshead to locate the scene of this holiday sport.

Page 112. "STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN."

It is fortunate for us that Wordsworth was not absorbed in German philosophy, else we never would have possessed these exquisite

poems on Lucy, — pearls gathered upon a golden thread. Five short poems are all we have of her whom we know not, save as she is here enshrined with an "artlessness which only art can know."

To analyze such poems as these is almost a sin; as well might one attempt to ascertain by the microscope the source of beauty in the flower.

They are genuine love-poems, and yet how far removed from that species of love-poetry which encourages vulgar curiosity, or the parade of the inmost sanctuary of the heart. All that is given us is that Lucy once lived, is now no more. Those who are able to comprehend these poems will be least disposed to discuss them.

Many have wondered why one who could write such love-poems as these wrote so few. Aubrey de Vere says: "This question was once put to the Poet by myself; and a part of the reply was this, — 'Had I been a writer of love-poetry it would have been natural to me to write it with a degree of warmth which could hardly have been approved by my principles.'" In his stanzas "The Poet and the Caged Turtle Dove" we find this additional answer, —

"Love, blessed love, is everywhere  
The spirit of my song."

It is significant that these are almost the only poems as to which the poet was silent in his autobiographical notes.

Page 113. A POET'S EPITAPH.

Lines 37-56. In this portrait of Wordsworth's ideal poet we find clearly marked those characteristics which he himself possessed.

Page 114. ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —.

The subject of this poem, and the three which follow it, was the master of Hawkshead School, Rev. William Taylor, the third of the masters who taught Wordsworth.

Lines 3, 4. These lines were no doubt suggested by the fact that just before his death the master sent for the boys of the upper class, among them Wordsworth, and gave them his blessing. He was buried in Cartmell Churchyard. See "The Prelude," x. 534.

Page 115. MATTHEW.

In editions of the poet's works 1800-1820, the title of this poem was, "Lines written on a Tablet in a School." Not until after 1836 was it called "Matthew." The tablet still may be seen in the old school, which has now been adorned with quotations from the poet's works.

1800

Page 123. "BLEAK SEASON WAS IT."

On Feb. 10, 1799, Wordsworth and his sister set their faces toward England, and the poet voiced their feelings at the joyous event in that vernal hymn which now stands as the

first forty lines of "The Prelude." At this time Wordsworth had in mind a poem in three parts and an introduction. The introduction was to deal with events in the development of his own life, while the main work, in three parts, was to be a philosophical discussion of the great principles pertaining to man, Nature, and human life. This poem was to be called "The Recluse." Only the introduction, "The Prelude," the second part, "The Excursion," and the first book of the first part were completed. "The Excursion" was the only part published during his life. "The Prelude" was published in 1850, and the first part of "The Recluse" not until 1888. This selection and the one following from "The Recluse" were first published by the bishop of Lincoln in his *Memoirs of the poet*, 1851. They relate to the settlement at Grasmere, and I place them here on the supposition that they were written not far from 1800.

On returning to England Wordsworth and his sister visited their relatives, the Hutchinsons, at Sockburn-on-Tees, County Durham; there they remained until autumn. In September Wordsworth, his brother John, and Coleridge made an excursion through the Lake District. They were greatly pleased with the vale of Grasmere and the cottage at Town-End which bore the sign of *The Dove and Olive Bough*. Wordsworth leased the cottage and on the 19th of December, 1799, they set out for their new home. After a journey of three days over snow and ice, turning aside to see the frozen waterfalls and watch the changing aspect of cloud and sunshine, they reached Dove Cottage on the 21st. During the years of residence here, by dint of "plain living and high thinking," was produced that poetry which placed Wordsworth among the Immortals. Dove Cottage is perhaps more often thought of in connection with the poet than is Rydal, the home of his later years.

The situation is beautiful for prospect, being on the right of the road over White Moss Common as you approach Grasmere from Ambleside. The garden, so often alluded to in his poetry, slopes upward to the wooded heights, and has not suffered much alteration since 1800. Here still bloom the primroses and daffodils. From the terrace, approached by stone steps cut by Wordsworth himself, one gets a beautiful view across the lake to Silver How, Red Bank, and Loughrigg, on the west and south: while to the east and north the eye ranges from Fairfield, Helvellyn, and Dunmail Raise, to Heln Crag and Easdale. The view from the front of the house has become obstructed by cottages and a pretentious modern hotel. The house and garden are now the property of trustees, and will forever remain memorials of the great poet. At Dove Cottage was begun Dorothy's Grasmere Journal, which, besides revealing the manner of plain living, gives us a clear insight into her own rare poetic nature, and discloses the day and hour, with attendant incidents, of the birth of most of the poems her brother wrote here.

1799-1805

Page 124. THE PRELUDE.

The history of "The Prelude" is interesting in many ways, as it is, in the nature of its revelations, the most significant poem he ever wrote. It was begun on Feb. 10, 1799, as he turned toward England after an absence of six months in Germany. His Republican ardor had somewhat cooled and he had come to know, in a very real sense, the spirit of his native land. On settling at Grasmere "The Prelude" became his serious work until 1805, when it was completed. It was mainly composed on the terrace walk at Under Lanerigg, and was written by his faithful amanuenses, his sister Dorothy and Mrs. Wordsworth. It was written primarily for himself, as a test of his own powers, at a time when he was diffident as to his ability to serve the muse on any more arduous subject.

When it was completed he found the reality so far short of his expectation that no steps were taken to publish it. The fact that it pleased Coleridge, "the brother of his soul," made large amends for his own disappointment, and he occasionally revised it until 1839. As late as 1839 Miss Fenwick alludes to Wordsworth's revision of "The Prelude." At that time she writes to Sir Henry Taylor: "Our journey was postponed for a week, that the beloved old poet might accomplish the work that he had in hand, the revision of his grand autobiographical poem." It remained in MS. and without a title until the year of his death, when it was published by Mr. Carter, the poet's secretary, with the "Advertisement" which now appears at its head, and the title "The Prelude" given it by Mrs. Wordsworth. During the half century which has elapsed since its publication it has steadily gained in favor until it is acknowledged to be the greatest poem of its kind in any language, free from every taint of vanity, a biography minute and authentic which can be read with implicit confidence. Coleridge once said: "Wordsworth ought never to abandon the contemplative position. His proper title is *spectator ab extra*." The growth of Wordsworth's poetic nature, as seen in "The Prelude," affords us an introduction, not only to all his own later work, but also to much of modern poetry in general. It reveals the source of that genius and passion, wisdom and truth, which characterizes his great work as poet and philosopher. As it deals with the period of his life before 1800, it should be read here as an introduction to the Grasmere period. The student is advised to read with "The Prelude," *La Jeunesse de Wordsworth* by the distinguished French scholar and critic, M. Émile Legouis. This singularly interesting study of "The Prelude" is one of the most illuminating contributions to Wordsworthian literature. It has recently been translated into English.

BOOK FIRST. Lines 1-40. In the spring of 1799 the Wordsworths, after a cold dreary winter at Goslar, returned to England; as they left the city and felt the breeze fan their

cheeks Wordsworth poured forth the glad some strain with which "The Prelude" opens. This was in his thirtieth year. "The Prelude" was completed in 1805.

Line 46. *Friend*. Samuel Taylor Coleridge. On the publication of "The Prelude," 1850, Sara Coleridge wrote: "It is a great pride and pleasure indeed to me that it is addressed to my father. They will ever be associated in the minds of men in time to come. I think there was never so close a union between two such eminent minds in any age."

Line 62. *place*. At Sockburn-on-Tees, County Durham, where, on returning to England, they visited their kindred, the Hutchinsons.

Line 72. *Vale*. Grasmere.

Line 74. *cottage*. Dove Cottage.

Line 81. *rustled*. The sense of hearing was remarkably acute in Wordsworth, and its workings are prominent in his poetry.

Line 106. *journey*. Wordsworth and his sister left Sockburn on the 19th of December, 1799, and reached their cottage on the 21st.

Lines 108-120. With only a hundred pounds a year they were turning their backs upon the world, with dalesmen for their neighbors and verse-making for their business. Here was produced the most of that poetry which has made Wordsworth immortal.

Lines 187-190. *Mithridates* of Pontus, who fled into Armenia.

Line 191. *Sertorius*. A Roman general who, being proscribed by Sulla, fled into Spain and thence to Mauritania.

Line 192. *Fortunate Isles*. Supposed to be the Canaries.

Line 202. *heroes*. They claimed to have descended from a band of Christians who fled from Spain when it was conquered by the Moslems.

Line 206. *Frenchman*. Dominique de Gourgues.

Line 212. Gustavus I. of Sweden.

Lines 214, 215. *name of Wallace, etc.*

"At Wallace's name what Scottish blood  
But boils up in a spring-tide flood" - BURNS

Lines 270-275. Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth in the north country of England and in sight of the Scottish hills. The town is situated at the junction of two rivers, the Cocker and the Derwent.

Line 283. *towers*. Cockermouth Castle, standing on an eminence not far from the manor-house in which Wordsworth was born, was built by the first lord of Allerdale in the reign of William I. as a border defense. It is one of the finest castle ruins in England. See sonnet, "Spirit of Cockermouth Castle."

Line 286. *terrace walk*. At the garden, in the rear of the manor-house, is the terrace upon which the poet had his childish sports. The house and its surroundings are unaltered since the poet's father lived there.

Lines 288-300. At this early age he took delight in his own thoughts and his own company, and was touched with "those visions of

the hills" which produced in him the feeling of reverence and awe in the presence of Nature.

Line 304. *Vale*. At Hawkshead, a small market-town in the vale of Esthwaite, the most picturesque district of Lancashire. This old town presents us more of interest as connected with Wordsworth than Grasmere even, as it has suffered less from modern "improvements," and for this reason is less frequented by the hasty tourist who allows only a few days in which to see the Lakes. There is no more delightful spot in the district for recreative enjoyment; whether we wander by the lake, or loiter on the fellside, whether we ascend the summit of Wetherlam where the ravens build, or rest in the vale where "woodcocks run."

Line 307. *birth-days*. Wordsworth, at the age of nine, entered the Hawkshead school.

Line 311. *heights*. The hills leading up to the moor between Hawkshead and Couston.

Line 326. *Vale*. Yewdale. A beautiful pastoral vale near Hawkshead.

Line 335. *crag*. Ravens' Crag in Yewdale.

Line 359. *core*. By the side of Esthwaite Lake. One going from Hawkshead by the east shore of the lake can recognize this spot.

Line 370. *craggy ridge*. The mountain Ironkeld.

Line 378. *huge peak*. Either Nab Sear or Pike o' Stickle.

Lines 400-410. This educational power of Nature never ceased; day and night, summer and winter, its silent influence stole into his soul.

Lines 425-463. Coleridge cites these lines in proof of his fourth characteristic excellency of Wordsworth's work.

Line 490. *brooks*. Among the hills of Yewdale.

Line 499. *cottages*. Wordsworth lived for nine years with one Anne Tyson for whose simple character he had a profound regard. The house still remains unaltered. The door is interesting as having upon it the "latch" mentioned in book second.

Line 543. The dalesmen tell us that the sound of the ice breaking up in this valley is just as here described.

Line 586. In all his sports there was nothing to distinguish him from other boys, except that in the midst of the scramble for the raven's nest or the run of "hare and hounds," the invisible, quiet life of the world spake to him remembrance things.

BOOK SECOND. Lines 5-10. Never did boy spend a healthier, purer, or happier school-time. His love for Nature was no different from that of other boys. It was a time full of giddy bliss and joy of being, yet he was gaining

"Truths that wake to perish never"

Lines 19-32. In after life, when sorrow and pain come upon us, it will help us rise above them if we recollect the joy and force of youth. The possibility of turning the lamentable waste of excessive sorrow into a source of strength is a central idea in Wordsworth's philosophy.

Line 56. *Windermere*. The largest of the English lakes, and not far from Hawkshead.

Lines 58-65. Belle Isle, Lily of the Valley Island, and Lady Holm. Upon Lady Holm there was, in the time of Henry VIII., a chapel dedicated to St. Mary.

Line 101. *temple*. At Conishead Priory. There are many remains of the Druid worship in the lake country.

Line 103. Furness Abbey, the largest abbey in England with the exception of Fountains Abbey, contained sixty-five acres; it was founded by Stephen in 1127. The old name of Furness was Bekansghyll — Glen of Deadly Nightshade — from an herb Bekan which grew there.

Line 137. Cartmell sands, where Windermere, through the Leven, enters the sea.

Line 140. White Lion Inn at Bowness. The location is easily identified at the present time.

Lines 157-159. An exact description of the scene from Bowness Church where the old tavern stood.

Line 168. Robert Greenwood, who became Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Line 185. *mountain*. Either Wetherlam or Cousin Old Man.

Lines 193, 194. This is an accurate description of the rising of the moon over the southern shore of Esthwaite.

Line 197. Esthwaite,

"Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky  
And little plot of stars" — *Peter Bell*

Lines 201-203. The first step in Wordsworth's education, when the influences of Nature were unconsciously received, was now closing, and the second, when the influences were consciously sought, was opening.

Line 280. The props of his early impressions were his boyish sports, and when he turned away from them, still the impression remained. He had begun to realize all that he had been learning unconsciously.

Line 333. *Friend*. The Rev. John Flemming, of Rayrigg, Windermere.

Line 339. *latch*. Still on the door of the old cottage.

Line 343. *eminence*. One of the heights northeast of Hawkshead.

Lines 401-403. Nature now began to put on the appearance of personality, with whom he could commune. It is a wonderful picture of a youthful life in communion with the Being of the world.

Lines 421-451. He was now in his seventeenth year. The history of his boyhood is completed in the adoration and love of God. Looking back upon these years he recognizes that the faithful, temperate, and quiet character of his life has been due to the early association with the beautiful and the sublime things in the outward world. This is the philosophy of the great "Ode."

Line 452. Coleridge was a charity boy at

Christ's Hospital, London. This old school was founded on the site of Grey Friars Monastery, by Edward VI. In 1902 it was moved to Horsham, Sussex.

Line 466. Coleridge had gone to the Mediterranean in search of health.

BOOK THIRD. Lines 1-6. Through the liberality of two uncles, the education of Wordsworth was prolonged beyond his school-days. Wordsworth, in October, 1787, entered St. John's College, Cambridge. His education at the hands of Nature was to cease for a time. It was a great change from the retirement of the Grammar School at Hawkshead. King's College Chapel, with its lofty pinnacles, fretted roof of stone, and huge windows of stained glass, is the special boast of Cambridge.

Lines 13, 14. Many a country boy has had a similar experience as he entered a college town for the first time.

Line 15. The ruins of a camp or fortress used to defend the Fen-land (Cambridge) against William I.

Line 16. Named from the college, which it connects with those on the other side of the Cam.

Line 17. The Hoop Inn still exists.

Line 20. The newcomer at Cambridge is inducted into his rooms by a *gyp*, or college servant, who attends upon a number of students; he takes the former tenant's furniture at a valuation by the college upholsterer.

Line 32. The gowns of the various colleges are different from each other, and also from those worn by the officers.

Line 43. "These *wine parties* are the most common entertainments, being the cheapest and most convenient." — BRISTED, *Five Years in an English University*.

Lines 47, 48. Although Wordsworth's room is not pointed out to us by the officials, we know that it is one of two answering to this description.

Line 61. All of the details here are exact. The statue of Newton is full-size. In his right hand he holds a roll which rests upon the forefinger of the left hand; his face is raised as if looking off into the upper sphere. Miss Fenwick says that Wordsworth, on visiting Cambridge in 1839, found that the occupant of his old room had his bed in an alcove, but he drew it out to the window to show them how it stood, as this passage reveals.

Lines 64-75. "The little interests of the place were not great enough for one accustomed to the solemn and awful interests of Nature." — REV. S. BROOKE.

Lines 90-143. He was living a double life at Cambridge: one with the students; another with himself.

Lines 144-154. Sometimes he betrayed his inner life, but as at Hawkshead he was in appearance little different from the other students.

Wordsworth made Nature a new thing to man by adding what the true artist must ever add, —

"the gleam,  
The light that never was on sea or land."

Line 170. The philosophic theory of Words-

worth is rounded upon the identity of our childish instincts and our enlightened understanding.

Line 230. "Arnold is the type of English action; Wordsworth is the type of English thought." — F. W. ROBERTSON.

Lines 258-269. On a nature susceptible as his was, a residence in that ancient seat of learning could not but tell powerfully; if he had learned no more than what silently stole into him, the time would not have been misspent.

Line 275. *Mill*. Remains of this are to be seen about three miles from Cambridge.

Lines 298-300. Of this exploit Sir Francis Doyle, in his Oxford lectures, remarks: "A worthy clerical friend of mine, one of the best poetical critics I know, and also one of the soundest judges of port wine, always shakes his head about this, and says: 'Wordsworth's intentions were good, no doubt, but I greatly fear that his standard of intoxication was miserably low.'"

Line 312. *surplice*. On Saturday evenings, Sundays, and Saints' days the students wear surplices instead of gowns.

Line 322. His genius grew too deep and strong to grow fast.

"He read the face of Nature; he read Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton; he amused himself and rested, and since he was Wordsworth he could not have done better." REV. S. BROOKE.

Wordsworth's sister Dorothy, in a letter written in 1791, says: "William reads Italian, Spanish, French, Greek, Latin, and English."

Line 491. He lost the shadow, but kept the substance of education.

Lines 580, 581. In this miniature world he had developed in him the human element.

BOOK FOURTH. Lines 1-10. On the road leading from Kendal to Windermere. The description is exceedingly accurate.

Line 13. "The ferry, called "Nab," is below Bowness.

Line 18. *hill*. Leading from the ferry to Sawrey.

Line 21. Hawkshead Church. An old Norman structure built in 1160.

Line 22. The position of the church on the hill above the village is such that it is a conspicuous object from the Sawrey Hill. In tramping through this region "The Prelude" is the best of guides.

Lines 28-39. Ann Tyson, with whom the poet had spent nine years.

Lines 47, 48. There is no trace and no tradition of the "stone table" and "dark pine" at Hawkshead.

Line 51. The famous brook presents some difficulties to the relie hunter. Crossing the lane leading to the cottage we find it nearly covered with large, slate flags, giving the name Flag Street to one of the alleys of Hawkshead.

Line 76. His Academical attire.

Line 82. Cottage faces southwest, and in one of the two upper rooms the poet must have slept.

Line 89. No remains of the ash can be found. Lines 191, 192. The result of his university life.

Lines 280, 281. "We must often reach the higher by going back a little, and Wordsworth's 'boundless chase of trivial pleasure' was a necessary parenthesis in his education." — REV. S. BROOKE.

Line 310. At a farmhouse near Hawkshead.

Line 323. At this baptismal hour his path must have been from some of the heights north of Hawkshead.

Line 380. The brook is Sawrey beck, on the road from Windermere to Hawkshead, and the long ascent is the second from the ferry.

Line 387. The narrative with which he closes the book is a proof that his interest was now turning toward man.

BOOK FIFTH. Lines 18-28. *Thou also, man!* etc. We seem here to find a reason for his deliberately sacrificing this great poem during these years when to have published it would have meant so much to him.

Line 60. I read while at school all Fielding's works, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *the Tale of the Tub*. W. W.

Lines 88-92. All that is of lasting value in the intellectual achievement of the poet, according to this dream, are the books of poetry and mathematical science. Cf. Preface, 1800, "If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man."

Line 162. See Coleridge's sixth characteristic of Wordsworth.

Line 198. Wordsworth believed in the motto *non multa sed multum* as applied to reading, and Emerson is perhaps, next to Wordsworth, the best exponent of the results of such a course.

Lines 230-241. A high tribute to his early teachers. Before going to Hawkshead Wordsworth had been taught by his mother, the Rev. Mr. Gillbanks of Cockermouth, and Mrs. Anne Birkett of Penrith; while his father had required him to learn portions of the great English poets. At Hawkshead he wrote English and Latin verse, studied mathematics and classics, but best of all had freedom to read what books he liked. This was equally true of Coleridge at Ottery and Christ's Hospital.

Line 257. Mrs. Wordsworth died when the poet was in his eighth year.

Lines 264-266. Wordsworth, fortunate as he was in his birthplace, was no less fortunate in having a mother worthy of such a tribute as he here pays to her. Cf. "Paradise Lost," viii, 546-559, and Tennyson's "Princess," 292-312, for similar tributes to a mother's influence.

Lines 298-340. He was among the first to protest against educational hot-beds.

Lines 347-388. Wordsworth here breaks with Rousseau, who taught that the child must be



withdrawn from the active world by a network of precautions born of mistrust, and asserts the guiding power of Nature.

Lines 383, 384. The frequent description of such scenes as this shows us how sensitive was the poet's ear. He recalls not only the general aspect of the place, but the sounds return as well.

Line 391. *Esthwaite*.

Line 392. *churchyard*. The description here is accurate.

Line 393. *school*. Hawkshead Free Grammar School, founded by Archbishop Sandys in 1585, was a famous classical school of the North of England; the building is changed but little since the poet's time. It rivals in interest and quaintness the Stratford Grammar School, and, like the latter, is still used. There is in it a library presented by the scholars, and an interesting old oak chest containing the original charter of the school. On the wall is a tablet containing the names of the masters. The oak benches are somewhat "insculpt'd upon," and one of them contains the name, - William Wordsworth. This the Wordsworth Society has had covered with glass to preserve it from relic-hunters. Over the outside door is the old sun-dial.

Line 397. *grave*. The grave of the boy cannot be identified.

Lines 421-425. The late Dr. Hudson has the following wise comment upon education. "Assuredly the need now most urgently pressing upon us, is to have vastly more of growth, and vastly less of manufacture, in our education; or, in other words, that the school be altogether more a garden, and altogether less a mill." - *Essays*.

Lines 491-495. Worldly advancement and preferment neither are, nor ought to be, the main end of instruction, either in schools or elsewhere. W. W.

Lines 507-511. *Our childhood sits*, etc. In these lines we have the principle of the "Ode on Immortality."

Lines 522-535. The picture here presented of the young imagination feeding upon the romantic and the legendary, is one which may well cause us to tremble, when we think how little present methods of education are doing to feed the taste in the young.

Line 561. *dear friend*. Unknown.

Line 563. *lake*. *Esthwaite*.

Line 570. Passages from Pope and Goldsmith. "The first verses I wrote were a task imposed by my master. I was called upon to write verses upon the completion of the second centenary of the school (1785). These were much admired - far more than they deserved, for they were but a tame imitation of Pope's versification and a little in his style." W. W.

Lines 586-605. *who in his youth*, etc. Wordsworth everywhere teaches that the joy of life must come from those childlike emotions which, if cherished, will become the most fruitful sources of ennobling the character.

BOOK SIXTH. It will be well for us to re-

view the first two acts in the poet's life in order that we may the better understand the third, into which the following books conduct us.

We have seen how his love of Nature was begotten, and how it was nurtured until the new element of Humanity is introduced by his University surroundings. We have been with him in those sacred moments, when - once, in the gray light of the gloaming, and again in the crimson flood of dawn - he felt that the altar-flame of his devotion was kindled, and that thenceforth he was "a dedicated spirit," a priest set apart for service in the Sanctuary of Nature. From these experiences of his we have learned something of the circumstances under which true poetry is born in all inspired souls, and we are now ready to follow him in his return to the University, and on his visit to the continent.

Line 6. *Granta and Cam* are names for the same stream.

Line 23. *many books*, etc. Being in advance of his class in Mathematics, he spent his time mostly with the Classics.

Line 28. *disobedience*. Considering the circumstances under which he was sent to Cambridge, it would not be unlikely that his uncles would be dissatisfied with his course.

Lines 45-56. Many of Wordsworth's finest poems were composed before this time (April, 1804), but he was still at work on "The Prelude."

Line 76. *A single tree*. In 1808, Dorothy, on visiting Cambridge, wrote: "I sought out a favourite ash-tree which my brother speaks of in his poem."

Lines 99, 100. This shows that the reading of the poet was not very "vague" after all.

Lines 110, 111. Alluding to the custom of forming English verse after the model of the Classics.

Line 117. *Though advanced*. "Before entering Cambridge he had mastered five books of Euclid, and Algebra through Quadratics." - KNIGHT.

Lines 180, 181. *Barclay*, etc. Thomson, "Castle of Indolence."

Line 189. It is this character of frankness in Wordsworth which renders "The Prelude" so faithful a record.

Line 193. *Dovedale*. In Derbyshire.

Lines 194-200. During his second summer vacation he was restored to his sister, who had been living at Penrith with maternal relatives.

Line 205. *castle*. Brougham Castle, built by Roger Lord Clifford, and situated at the junction of the Emont and Lowther, about a mile from Penrith. It is now in ruins. See "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle."

Line 208. *Helvellyn*. One of the largest mountains of the lake region, east of Grasmere and in sight of Dove Cottage.

Line 209. *Cross-fell*. A mountain near Helvellyn.

Line 224. Mary Hutchinson, a schoolmate of his at Penrith. See note, line 62, book i. Also see "She was a Phantom of delight."

Line 229. *So near us.* Wordsworth married Miss Hutchinson in 1802. See "A Farewell."

Line 233. *Border Beacon.* A hill northeast of Penrith upon which, during the Border Wars, beacon-fires were lighted to summon the country to arms.

Line 237. Coleridge and Wordsworth first met at Racedown in June, 1797.

Line 240. Coleridge had gone to Malta to regain his health.

Line 258. In poetry and philosophy.

Lines 266-274. A blue-coat-boy at Christ's Hospital, London. "Come back into memory as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, logician, metaphysician, bard! How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still, entranced . . . while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the inspired charity boy!" — LAMB.

Line 272. *stream.* River Otter in Devon.

Line 279. *thou comest.* Coleridge entered Cambridge in February, 1791, one month after Wordsworth had taken his degree.

Line 281. *course.* See Life of Coleridge.

Line 294. See Charles Lamb's "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago," in his *Essays of Elia*.

Lines 319-321. When the Bastille fell Wordsworth was visiting his sister at Penrith and was unmoved by the event; but on returning to Cambridge he found the University waking up from its long lethargy. He had already planned to visit the Alps and was delighted that he would become acquainted with the country rising out of oppression.

Line 323. Robert Jones, a college mate, to whom the poet afterwards dedicated the "Descriptive Sketches," memorials of this tour.

Line 340. "We crossed at the time," wrote Wordsworth, "when the whole nation was mad with joy, in consequence of the Revolution."

Line 346. July 11, 1790, when the King swore fidelity to the new Constitution. They went from Dover to Calais.

Line 350. By Ardres, Peronne, and Soissons, to Chalons, and thence sailed to Lyons.

Lines 374-406. At Condrieu.

Line 377. July 29, 1790.

Line 395. *We landed.* At Lyons.

Lines 407-414. "The delegates sent from Marseilles to the Federation." E. LÉGOUIS.

Lines 418-429. On Aug. 4, they reached Chartreuse, a monastery situated on a rock 4000 feet above the sea. Here, fifty years earlier, Gray had uttered the first notes of enthusiasm for Alpine scenery to be found in English literature. See Letter to Richard West, November, 1739.

Line 436. Forest of Bruno, near Chartreuse.

Line 439. Rivers at Chartreuse.

Line 480. *groves.* In the valley of Chartreuse.

Line 484. Crosses on the Rocks of the Chartreuse brow.

Line 497. From July 13 to Sept. 29.

Line 519. *vale.* Between Martigny and Col de Balme.

Line 524. *ridge.* Col de Balme.

Line 563. Built by Napoleon.

Line 619. Down the Italian side of the Simplon. See poem on the Simplon Pass.

Line 663. The banks of Lago di Como are mountains 3000 feet high, with hamlets, villas, chapels, and convents.

Line 665. *pathways.* Footpaths are the only communication, by land, from village to village.

Lines 670, 671. In "Descriptive Sketches."

Line 700. *Gravedona.* At the head of Lake Como.

Line 723. *night.* Aug. 21, 1790.

Line 764. They reached Cologne Sept. 28, and went thence through Belgium to Calais.

BOOK SEVENTH. Lines 1-4. Feb. 10, 1799. See note, lines 1-10, book i. In a letter dated Grasmere, June 3, 1805, Wordsworth says: "I have the pleasure to say that I finished my poem about a fortnight ago." Thus we are sure that the last seven books must have been written in the year 1805.

Lines 4-6. *I sang,* etc. First two paragraphs of book i.

Line 7. *Seafell.* The highest mountain in the Lake District.

Lines 11, 12. *Stopped.* It is evident that this was in 1802, otherwise we cannot account for the "years" intervening before "last primrose-time," 1801.

Line 13. *assurance.* Coleridge, before going to Malta, urged Wordsworth to complete this work.

Line 16. *summer.* 1804.

Line 31. *Will chant.* This book must have been begun in the fall of 1804.

Line 41. *grove.* John's Grove, so called because it was the favorite resort of the poet's brother, Captain Wordsworth. It is but a few moments' walk from Dove Cottage. One passes it by the middle-road to Rydal, opposite the famous "Wishing Gate;" from it there is a fine view across the lake to the mountains beyond. See "When, to the attractions of the busy world."

Line 52. *excursion.* Related in book vi.

Line 51. *quitted.* He took his degree, B. A., in January, 1791.

Lines 58-65. *Undetermined.* etc. He went at once to visit his sister at Forncett Rectory, near Norwich, where he remained six weeks. The crisis of his life came between this time and his settlement at Grasmere. He had resolved to be a poet, but poetry would not feed him unless he prostituted his talents and wrote for the crowd. In this perplexity of mind he went to London, and roamed about, noting men and things. Meanwhile his friends were urging him to enter the church, the law, or the army.

Line 65. *Three years.* It is evident from this that he visited London in 1788.

Line 112. *Whittington.* A famous citizen of London, thrice Lord Mayor.

Line 121. *Vauxhall,* etc. Pleasure gardens on the Thames, now built upon.

Line 129. See "Sonnet on Westminster Bridge."

Line 131. *Giants*. Gog and Magog, sometimes carried in the pageant of Lord Mayor's Day.

Line 132. *Bedlam*. Hospital built in 1549.

Line 136. *Monument*. On Fish Street Hill, erected to commemorate the Great Fire in September, 1666. *Tower*. The most celebrated fortress in Great Britain. It has been used as royal residence, armory, prison, treasure-house and seat of government.

Line 160. Referring to the custom of marking the house in which some noted man lived. 7 Craven St., Strand, has, "Benjamin Franklin lived here."

Line 267. *Sadler's Well*. A theatre, named from the spring in the garden.

Line 297. *Maid*. Buttermere is about fifteen miles from Grasmere. The "Spoiler" was afterwards hanged at Carlisle.

Line 383. To Cambridge, 1787.

Lines 458, 459. All of these events lose their triviality when considered as necessary parts of the poet's education.

Line 484. His father had set him to learn passages from the best English poets.

Line 491. *stage*. Parliament, when the debates were in progress on the French Revolution. He said, "You always went away from Burke with your mind filled."

Line 498. See Shakespeare's *King Henry V*.

Line 529. *Theory*. See Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*.

Lines 545-572. Wordsworth seldom resorts to satire, but here are some keen shafts directed against the fashionable preacher of the day.

Line 564. *Death of Abel*. By Solomon Gessner, born in Zurich, 1730. *Bard*. Young, author of *Night Thoughts*.

Line 568. *Moreen*. A hilly district of France.

Line 678. *St. Bartholomew*. Henry I. granted the privileges of holding fairs on this day.

BOOK EIGHTH. In the rush and roar of London, caught in the tides of her feverish life, Wordsworth seems to have been drifting aimlessly. But the poet's heart was beating in his breast all the more rapidly because of the contrast of the city's din to the quiet of his cloister life at Cambridge; and at each pulse he felt himself drawn nearer to the life of man. Until this time, Nature was first, and Man second; here in the centre of the great metropolis the transition was made. Now, at the beginning of the eighth book, he looks back and gives us an inside view of the workings of his own soul while it was being played upon by the influences of Nature and of Man. The value of book viii., of itself the least interesting in "The Prelude," is not grasped except by understanding its relation to the following,—

"There's a day about to break,  
There's a light about to dawn."

Lines 1-20. One of these fairs is alluded to by Dorothy in her Grasmere Journal, Sept. 2,

1800, when Coleridge was with them at Dove Cottage. "We walked to the Fair. . . . It was a lovely moonlight night, and the sound of dancing and merriment came along the still air." The annual sports of the North of England at Grasmere resemble one of these fairs,—

"Bid by the day they wait for all the year,  
Shepherd and swain their gayest colours don,  
For race and smewy wrestling meet upon  
The tourney ground beside the shining mere."

H. D. RAWNSLEY.

Lines 48-52. From *Malvern Hills*, by Mr. Joseph Cottle (see Prefatory Note to book i.).

Lines 70-76. Looking back, the poet sees that his love of Nature led him to the love of Man.

Line 77. *Gehol*. Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

Lines 98-100. His childhood, passed among magnificent scenery where man was free, was moulded by the simple life of home. The men were as sturdy and incorruptible as the mountains themselves. The beauty of his country, like that of Switzerland, was more beautiful because of the liberty of soul which characterized the people.

Line 128. These shepherds, living as they did so near to Nature, seemed to his young imagination but another aspect of the life of the hills. The rocks and streams were vocal, in the traditions of the dalesmen, with many a tale of suffering or heroism amid the howling winds and the driving storms which often destroyed both them and their flocks. See "Fidelity."

Lines 145-163. Some of the rural pastimes are still kept alive in the region of the Lakes, but the tourist, with his fine clothes, pretension, and presents, has done much to create dissatisfaction in the breasts of the rural folk. At Grasmere and Ambleside the custom of "Rush Bearing" is continued, in memory of the time when the people strewed the ground in the churches with rushes gathered from the lakeside. It now occurs in August, and the rushes wreathed with flowers are used to decorate the church. It is a Children's Festival. Never do they forget to place an offering on the poet's grave.

Lines 170-172. See "The Brothers."

Line 175. *Galesus*. An Italian river, famous for fine-fleeced sheep.

Line 180. *Clitumnus*. A tributary to the Tiber.

Line 182. *Lucretilis*. A hill near the farm of Horace.

Line 186. *pastoral tract*. At Goslar. Prefatory Note, book i.

Line 210. *walls*. He says, "I walked daily on the ramparts, or on a sort of public ground or garden."

Line 215. *Hercynian*. Near the Rhine, in Southern and Central Germany.

Line 217. *channels*. Wastdale, Ennerdale, Yewdale, etc.

Lines 223-293. The passage is unique and

unmatchable; it is characterized by a profound sincerity and an exquisite naturalness.

Lines 294-340. Thus it was that the poet gained his firm faith in the nobility of man. He did not find evil as fast as he found good in those early days, for he read his first lesson on Man from the book of Nature, and saw him in his setting of beauty and sublimity.

Lines 340-391. Although Nature was at first pre-eminent in his thoughts, yet his vision of man was growing clearer and clearer, and he began to unite the two in one picture.

Line 408. *rock*. It is difficult to determine whether this alludes to Dove Cottage or that of Ann Tyson. If the former is meant, the rock would be on Red Bank; if the latter, it would be on the hill northwest of Hawkshead.

Line 421. In preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, he says: "Fancy is given us to quicken and beguile the temporal part of our nature; imagination, to incite and support the eternal."

Line 459. *Thurstonmere*. Coniston Lake, to the west of Hawkshead.

Line 468. The following eight lines are recast from a poem which he wrote in anticipation of leaving school, and which he said was a tame imitation of Pope's versification.

Line 477. *high emotions*. Poetry written before 1805.

Line 513. *Entered*. Probably in 1788.

Line 532. *Antiparos*. One of the Cyclades, containing a stalactitic cave. *Don*. A limestone cavern near Ingelton in Yorkshire.

Line 619. For Wordsworth's theory of diction, see Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800.

BOOK NINTH. He now loved both Nature and Man, and his enthusiasm for humanity was growing day by day. After spending four months, February, March, April, and May, in London, he visited his friend Jones in Wales, and refreshed himself by communion with the hills, visiting Menai, Conway, and Betgeleert. Yet even here in the solitude of Nature, the voice of Humanity sounding in that song of liberty allured him to the theatre of Revolution. The Revolution was not confined to the sphere of politics: that was only one feature of the great movement toward the goal of equal rights to which the nations were tending. It was a return to Nature in all the departments of life. This enthusiasm for Nature took form in France under Rousseau's extravagant and diseased sensibility. In Germany the same feeling was manifested by Goethe, who combined the poetic with the scientific aspect of Nature, and swelled the great wave of feeling which was gathering force as it advanced. In England it had been growing into form for half a century. The heralds of the day arose from quarters, and under circumstances quite unexpected, — from the sorrow and disappointment of Cowper and the untaught melodies of the ploughboy of Avrshire, — the one in his invalid nightcap, the other in his blue bonnet and homespun. But the poet who was to conduct the heart of England to the love of rivers, woods, and hills was, in the autumn of 1791,

leaving Brighton for Paris, about to plunge into the blood and furor of that revolutionary city.

Line 35. *So lately*. With Jones in 1790.

Line 40. *town*. Orleans.

Line 45. *field of Mars*. In the west of Paris.

Line 46. *St. Antony*. In the east of the city.

Line 47. *Martre*. In the north of the city.

*Dome*. The Pantheon, in the south.

Line 51. *toss*. On May 4, 1789, the clergy, noblesse, and tiers état, constituting the States General, met in Notre Dame. The next day the tiers état assumed the title of the National Assembly, and urged the others to join them.

Line 52. *Palace*. Palais Royal, built by Cardinal Richelieu.

Line 68. *Bastille*. State prison and citadel of Paris.

Line 77. *Le Brun*. Court painter of Louis XIV.

Line 132. They were so disgusted with the Revolution that they stood ready to join the emigrants in arms against their country under Leopold, king of Prussia, and to restore the old régime.

Line 139. *One*. The Republican general, Beaupuis.

Line 176. *Carra, Gorsas*. Journalist deputies.

Line 182. *flight*. See note, line 132.

Lines 216, 217. Ruskinn, in 1876, said that he had, in his fields at Coniston, men who might have fought with Henry V. at Agincourt without being distinguished from one of his knights.

Lines 230-232. "Drawn from a strong Scandinavian stock, they dwell in a land as solemn and beautiful as Norway itself. The Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded, perhaps, as near a realization as human fates have yet allowed of a rural society which statesmen have desired for their country's greatness." — F. W. H. MYERS.

Line 265. *posting on*. See note, line 132.

Lines 281-287. Thus it was that the Revolution touched the hearts of the young and imaginative minds of England; the light of a new heaven and a new earth seemed about to dawn on men.

Lines 290-321. In company with this rejected Republican, Wordsworth lived; they were kindred spirits.

Lines 340-363. The oppression and tyranny which had hindered Man's progress.

Lines 390-430. "Beaupuis was to Wordsworth the ideal at once of a warrior and a citizen." — E. LEGGERS.

Line 333. *Greta*. A river which flows past the home of Southey at Keswick. See sonnet to the River Greta. *Derwent*. See note, lines 270-275, book i.

Line 409. *Dion*. A pupil of Plato's. See the poem "Dion," composed in 1816.

Line 410. Both Plato and Dion tried to influence Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, but did not succeed.

Line 412. Philosophers who assisted Dion.

Line 413. *Syracusan exiles.*  
Line 416. *Dion took Syracuse. Zacynthus.* One of the Cyclades.

Line 424. *perished, etc.* Beaupuis did not perish in *La Vendée*, he was wounded.

Line 451. *Angelica.* Character in the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto.

Line 453. *Erminia.* Heroine of *Jerusalem Delivered*.

Line 481. *Romorentin.* Capital of Sologne.

Line 482. *Blois.* Wordsworth went from Orleans to Blois in the spring of 1792.

Line 484. *lady.* Claude, daughter of Louis XII.

Line 491. *Chambord.* Nine miles from Blois, noted for its elutean and park.

Lines 501-541. These dreams have been pronounced chimerical; yet if they are to prove so, the spirit of Christianity and its root-thoughts must be equally chimerical.

Line 547. *a tale.* "Vaudracour and Julia," founded on a tale related to Wordsworth by a French lady who was an eye-witness of the scene described. See p. 327.

Line 553. The following four lines are the prelude to the above-mentioned poem.

BOOK TENTH. Line 11. *Metropolis.* In the autumn of 1792 he left Blois for Paris.

Line 12. *fallen.* Aug. 10, 1792, the mob stormed the Tuileries and imprisoned the king and his family in the Temple.

Line 18. *Mogul.* A corruption of Mongol.

Line 19. *Agra and Lahore.* Cities implicated in the Sepoy rebellion.

Line 20. *Rajahs,* the native princes of India; *Onrahs,* their officials.

Line 36. *League.* The union of Louis with European monarchs.

Line 41. *Republic.* On the 22d of September, 1792, the Republic was proclaimed.

Line 43. *massacre.* The Danton massacres were just over.

Line 48. He arrived in Paris in October, 1792. The city heaved like a volcano. Robespierre, one of the Committee of Public Safety, was rising.

Line 56. *Carrousel.* Place de Carrousel, a public square.

Lines 63-93. *But that night, etc.* Although he took sides against Robespierre, yet he held fast to the principles of the Revolution.

Line 111. Jean Baptiste Louvet.

Line 114. Robespierre got a delay of one week to prepare an answer, and by smooth speech finally triumphed.

Lines 120-190. The vein of optimism running through these lines is characteristic of a man trained as he had been.

Lines 198, 199. *Harmodius and Aristogiton.* Athenians who put to death the tyrant Hipparchus.

Lines 222-231. Such was the fascination of the terrible city, and such was his sympathy in the great movement, that had his funds not given out, he doubtless would have perished with his friends, the Brissotins. He returned to England in December, 1792.

Line 236. *Twice.* He left England in November, 1792.

Line 245. *To abide.* He remained in London during the winter of 1792-93, with his brother Richard.

Line 247. The movement of Clarkson and Wilberforce for abolishing the slave trade. See sonnet to William Clarkson.

Lines 264, 265. When in 1793 England joined with Holland and Spain against France, his indignation knew no bounds. If England was to disappoint him, where was he to look for support?

Line 283. *rejoiced.* This is the culmination of that idea of interest in mankind outside of the bounds of England which began in the poetry of Goldsmith, was continued in Cowper, and became so intense in Wordsworth.

Line 315. *red-cross flag.* Union Jack, the red cross of St. George, and the white cross of St. Andrew.

Lines 316-330. Wordsworth, in his advertisement to "Guilt and Sorrow," says: "During the latter part of the summer of 1793, passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet then preparing for sea at Portsmouth, and left the place with melancholy forebodings."

Lines 331-375. The "Reign of Terror" began in France in July, 1793.

Line 381. Madame Roland, wife of the minister of the interior under Dumouriez. When upon the scaffold, turning to the statue of Liberty, she said, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" Her husband committed suicide.

Line 383. *O Friend, etc.* The result, given in the following lines, was not a strange one on a nature like Wordsworth's. The eclipse of his fair idol of the rights of man was almost total.

Line 430. The love of Nature had been superseded by the love of Man, and now that the second love was weakening, the crisis was near at hand.

Lines 436-480. In his most passionate moods, temperance was at the centre, and prevented the flame of emotion from consuming him.

Line 491. With Robert Jones in the vacation of 1790.

Lines 496, 497. See sonnet, "Composed near Calais," 1802.

Line 498. *Arras.* A town one hundred miles from Paris, celebrated for its tapestries. The birthplace of Robespierre.

Line 512. The reaction from the "Reign of Terror" had set in; all parties combined against Robespierre, and he was executed by his former supporters, July 28, 1794.

Line 513. *The day.* In August, 1794.

Line 515. Over the Ulverston sands, where the waters of Windermere find their way to the sea.

Line 534. At Cartmell, where the Rev. William Taylor, master at Hawkshead School, 1782-86, was buried. Just before his death he sent for the upper boys of the school (amongst whom was Wordsworth), and took leave of them with a solemn blessing.

See "Address to the Scholars of the Village School."

Line 536. Besides the inscription are the following lines from Gray:—

"His merits, stranger, seek not to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode," etc.

Line 552. The writing of poetry was imposed as a task upon the boys of the Hawkshead School. See "Lines Written as a School Exercise at Hawkshead, Anno Ætatis 14."

Lines 596-598. On his way to Hawkshead from Furness Abbey and Combshead Priory.

BOOK ELEVENTH. Line 1. *time*. "The Reign of Terror."

Line 11. *in the People*. How deep was that faith which could still trust in the conscience of the masses!

Lines 53-73. The dread of revolution in England was in consequence of there being many supporters of France there.

Line 98. *I began*. He was now to use his intellect more than his heart, and to study man as a citizen; the result was that he was led to take a greater interest in political and national questions than any poet of his time.

Lines 105-144. These lines first appeared in the *Friend*, Oct. 6, 1800. They were written in 1805, and, as he looked back on the dream which was now becoming fulfilled, it added new enthusiasm to the cause of Humanity, and made him the champion of the rights of man. It also furnished him the impulse to write that philosophical poem, "The Excursion."

Line 175. In 1795.

Line 206. In this act his last hopes of liberty suffered eclipse, and he was overwhelmed with shame and despondency; yet his hatred of oppression became stronger than ever, for he believed that in this movement all the darkest events of the old régime were combined. He uttered his indignation in that remarkable series of sonnets on liberty.

Lines 223-320. He now set about the analysis of right in the abstract, and in this operation even the grounds of right disappeared. This was the crisis of his life. He now plunged into the nether gloom by the use of this critical faculty. He grew sceptical of faith which could not be demonstrated by logic.

"Wordsworth was working out Godwin's philosophy, — that nothing should be admitted as certain unless confirmed by reason."—E. LEGOUIS.

Lines 333-348. *Then it was*, etc. In the winter of 1794 he joined his sister at Halifax. He had not seen her since 1790. She had always been his better angel, and in this sickness of his soul she knew what remedy to apply. The world has loved to view the picture of the devotion of Charles and Mary Lamb in their lives of sadness; the companion picture of William and Dorothy Wordsworth is not less interesting and touching. Mr. Paxton Hood says: "Not Laura with Petrarch, not Beatrice with Dante are more really connected than Wordsworth with

his sister Dorothy." See *Dorothy Wordsworth; or, Story of a Sister's Love*, by Edmund Lee.

Line 360. Buonaparte summoned the Pope to anoint him emperor of France in 1804.

Line 376. Coleridge was in Sicily, whither he had gone from Malta.

Line 379. *Timoleon*. Who reduced Sicily to order. He refused all titles, and lived as a private citizen.

Lines 418-423. See sonnet on "Departure of Sir Walter Scott for Naples."

Line 441. *Comates*. See Theocritus, *Idyll* vii. 28.

Line 450. At Dove Cottage.

Of the three books of "The Prelude" which describe the poet's residence in France Mr. John Morley says: "They are an abiding lesson to brave men how to bear themselves in hours of public stress."

BOOK TWELFTH. Lines 1-43. Healing had been ministered to a mind diseased, and he now looked upon the face of Nature with the imaginative delight of childhood yet with a fuller appreciation of the sources of her beauty. The harmony of thought and language in this passage is hardly surpassed by that of "Tintern Abbey."

Line 151. *And yet I knew a maid*, etc. The reference here is not to his sister, but to Mary Hutchinson, who afterward became his wife. Next to the blessing of that sister, who conducted him from the region of despair and spiritual death to that of assured hope and enlargement of soul, stands that

"Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food."

Her simplicity of manner and her soothing and sustaining influence are celebrated in many lines of the poet's later works. In the companionship of two such appreciative and home-hearted women, he was blessed beyond most of his brethren in song.

Lines 208-225. It is this element in Wordsworth's poetry that gives it its unwithering freshness, its power to make us see beauty in the commonplace, and to help us idealize the real. Thus Wordsworth's philosophy is not a theory; it is a *life*. It had saved him from despondency and spiritual death; it will recreate all of those who will but put themselves under its influences.

Lines 261-271. *When*, etc. The spiritual freedom which sets the poet's imagination into action seldom fails to centre it upon solid foundations.

Line 287. *One Christmas-time*. This was evidently 1783. His father was then living at Penrith, and the *led palfreys* would go by Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside. From Ambleside to Hawkshead there are two roads which meet within about two miles of Hawkshead village; here there are two crags, either of which would answer the description.

Lines 311-335. Wordsworth in this passage corroborates what has already been said of his

susceptibility to sound; he is always listening, and when he afterwards recalls the scenes, he blends sights and sounds, the latter often being the most prominent.

BOOK THIRTEENTH. Lines 1-10. The power with which Wordsworth illustrated this truth makes him one of the greatest teachers and benefactors of his age. He is no less the poet of contemplation than the poet of passion, and the lesson was taught him by Nature. It is only by calmness in the midst of passion that the highest beauty in poetry is attained. All of Wordsworth's finest poetry is the result of emotions recollected in tranquillity.

Lines 18-119. His emotion being now under regulation, he determined to find out the truths of human life. He gave up his sanguine schemes for the regeneration of mankind, and turned to the abodes of simple men, where duty, love, and reverence were to be found in their true relation and worth.

Lines 130-141. His wounded heart was healed as he experienced the "love in huts where poor men lie."

Lines 141-160. From the terrace-walk in the garden of the Cockermouth home can be seen the hill here referred to, and the road running over its summit. The road is now only a foot-path, but was then a public way to Isel, a town on the Derwent.

Lines 160-185. The riches which he gleaned from these mines of neglected wealth made him the singer of "simple songs for thinking hearts."

Lines 186-220. Wordsworth here touches the core of our modern artificial life and thinking.

Lines 220-278. This passage is the finest in thought, and the most perfect in expression, of any of "The Prelude." It illustrates the courage of the man who dared thus, in an age of superficiality and pride, to fly in the face of all the poetical creeds, and make the joys and sorrows that we encounter on the common high road of life the subjects of his song.

Line 314. *Sarum's Plain*. In 1793 he wandered with his friend William Calvert over Salisbury Plain. See "Guilt and Sorrow."

Line 353. *unpremeditated strains*. The "Descriptive Sketches." Coleridge happened upon these when an undergraduate at Cambridge, 1793, and wrote of them: "Seldom, if ever, was the emergence of a great and original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced."

Line 361. The poets did not meet until 1797. BOOK FOURTEENTH. Lines 1-10. In the summer of 1793 he visited his friend Jones in Wales.

Lines 35-130. Of this vision of the transmuting power of imagination, Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "It is one of the finest specimens of Wordsworth's *grand style*. It is as sustained and stately as Milton, but differs from Milton's style in the greater simplicity of diction."

Lines 168, 169. *By love, etc.* No great poet has been content with mere outward Nature; he must pass through it to the soul of man.

Wordsworth never rests in what appears to the outward eye; he rests only in the aspirations caused by what the senses reveal.

Line 253. "What was once harsh in Wordsworth was toned by the womanly sweetness of his sister; and with a devotion as rare as it was noble she dedicated to him her life and service." — EDMUND LEE. See "The Sparrow's Nest" and "Tintern Abbey."

Lines 266-268. Mary Hutchinson. See "She was a Phantom of delight," second stanza.

Line 281. Wordsworth said: "He and my sister are the two beings to whom my intellect is most indebted."

Line 311. See advertisement to "The Prelude," p. 124.

Line 353. After leaving London, 1793, he went to the Isle of Wight, the valley of the Wye, and later visited with his sister the scenes of his youth in Cumberland and Westmoreland.

Lines 355-369. *Calvert*. See sonnet "To Rainsley Calvert," and note to "Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree."

Line 386. See prefatory note to "The Prelude."

Lines 404-407. "The Idiot Boy" and "The Thorn."

Line 419. In the spring of 1800 their brother John, who was captain of an East Indian ship, came to their new home at Grasmere. He remained with them about eight months, and in the fall he started upon the voyage which he intended should be his last, as he desired to live with his brother and sister. In February, 1805, his vessel was wrecked off Portland, and all on board perished. There are touching allusions to him in "Elegiac Verses," "Character of the Happy Warrior," and "Lines suggested by seeing Pele Castle in a Storm."

Lines 430-454. The grand determination with which Wordsworth, abandoning professional life and giving himself to counteracting the "mechanical and utilitarian theories of his time," stood up against ridicule and obloquy, cannot be matched in literature.

See Coleridge, "To a Gentleman," for a significant appreciation of "The Prelude."

#### Page 222. THE RECLUSE.

The poet's own history of this poem has been given in his introductory notes to "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," pp. 124 and 403. "The Excursion" was the only one of the three projected poems that was published during the author's life. Selections from "The Recluse" were published in his *Guide to the Lakes*, one of which, "The Water-Fowl," appeared in subsequent editions of his poems; and two, "On Nature's invitation do I come" and "Bleak season was it," were published by the Bishop of Lincoln in the *Memoirs*. Although these selections have been given in this edition, as "The Recluse" was first printed in 1888, and as the date of composition is conjectural, it seems best to place it here with the poems written at Grasmere.

Lines 1-18. *Once to the verge*, etc. These lines, if taken literally, refer to the Hawks-head days, or to those of his college vacation.

Line 39. *One of thy lowly Dwellings*. Dove Cottage.

Lines 71-175. *On Nature's invitation do I come*, etc. See note, p. 831.

Lines 152-167. *Black season was it*, etc. See note, p. 831.

Lines 203, etc. *Behold how with a grace*, etc. See "Water-Fowl," p. 401.

Line 655. *Pilgrim of the Sea*. John Wordsworth. See "When, to the attractions of the busy world," and note.

Line 657. *And others*. The Hutchinsons.

Line 660. *Philosophy and Poet*. Coleridge. See "Stanzas written in my Pocket-Copy of Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence,'" p. 288, and note, p. 848.

Line 703. *While yet an innocent little one*, etc. See "Prelude," book i.

Lines 836-839.

*'Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st  
The human Soul,'* etc.

"Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic Soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come"  
SHAKESPEARE'S *Sonnets*

Lines 754-860. Used in Wordsworth's original prefatory note to "The Excursion," as "Prospectus."

#### PAGE 232. THE BROTHERS.

This exquisite idyl - the most dramatic of the poet's works - possesses all the beauty and grandeur of the grand and beautiful vale in which the scene is laid. Emeraldale surpasses, in its chaotic grandeur, any other vale in the district; it is guarded by steep and lofty mountains which seem to force the little community of dalesmen into closer unity and affection. It is a fitting framework for a healthy social order.

Line 310. *the Great Gavel . . . Leeza*. The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland Mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Emeraldale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale. The Leeza is a river which flows into the lake of Emeraldale: on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the Sea a little below Egremont. W. W.

Coleridge says of this and the following poem: "The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of 'The Brothers,' those of the shepherd of Greenhead Gill in 'The Michael,' have all the verisimilitude and representative quality that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class."

#### PAGE 238. MICHAEL.

The scene of this pastoral is Greenhead

Ghyll, not far from Dove Cottage. Turning to the right from the highway by the "Swan Inn," and following the beck, one will, without much difficulty, find where the "Evening Star" was situated; and a little farther up the beck sheepfolds, which are now used. Probably Michael's fold was still higher up; on the right of the beck there is a large oak-tree which may be the "Clipping Tree." A visit to the Ghyll and the pasture-land on the side of Fairfield is of great assistance to the appreciation of the spirit of the poem.

Dorothy's Journal of Oct. 11, 1800, has the following: "Walked up Greenhead Ghyll in search of a Sheepfold." 13th. "W. composed in the Evening." 15th. "W. again composed at the Sheepfold after dinner."

In a letter to Mr. Charles James Fox written this year, Wordsworth called attention to the greatest of national dangers - the disappearance of such a class of "Statesmen" as Michael represents, through the absorption of small freeholds by large estates. See F. W. H. Myers, *Wordsworth*, chapter iv.

Line 169. *Clipping Tree*. Clipping is the word used in the north of England for shearing. W. W.

See H. D. Rawnsley, *Life and Nature of the English Lakes*, "A Brig End Sheep Clipping."

#### PAGE 244. THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS.

The scene of this poem is in the Langdale Pikes, - Harrison Stickle, and Pike o' Stickle, at the head of Great Langdale. It is reached from Grasmere by Easdale, a vigorous climb, over Silver How, or by Red Bank. The first two routes for pedestrians only, the last is a good carriage road. The last stanza of the poem is a good description of the Ghyll as it is to-day.

#### PAGE 247. "IT WAS AN ATRIL MORNING: FRESH AND CLEAR."

In this year life at the Cottage was enriched by visits from Coleridge, Robert Jones, John Wordsworth, and the Hutchinsons. Dorothy writes in her Journal, "On Sunday (June 29) Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley came."

This and the following six poems belong to a class, "On the Naming of Places," written to record incidents which happened in connection with some of the poet's friends. To one familiar with the lake land the evidence of attachments for localities where little incidents have taken place is seen in the names there preserved. All lovers of the poet delight in identifying places especially dear to him.

The scene of this poem is in Easdale, a half-hour's walk from Dove Cottage. Leaving Grasmere village we soon cross Goody Bridge and Easdale beck, by the side of which the poet said he had composed thousands of verses. Following this beck from the bridge, we come to a deep pool, with a "single mountain cottage" not far distant. On the opposite side of the valley is the mountain terrace, Lanerigg, where "The Prelude" was composed.



The poet's sister is frequently referred to as 'Emma' or 'Emmeline.'

**Page 248. TO JOANNA (HUTCHINSON).**

This scene is laid on the Rotha, the river which flows by the Grasmere Churchyard (where the poet is buried), and empties into the lake; thence it flows into Rydal Water.

Dorothy writes, Aug. 22, "W. read us the poem 'Joanna,' beside the Rothay, by the roadside."

The "lofty firs" stood near the church tower but were removed to widen the road. The "tall rock" is probably on the side of Helm Crag. Silver-ho, Loughrigg, Fairfield, and Helvellyn are the mountains which surround the Vale; while Skiddaw, Glaramara, and Kirkstone are at a considerable distance on the north and east.

**Page 249. "THERE IS AN EMINENCE."**

The "eminence" is Stone-Arthur, on the east of the road leading over Dunmail Raise, and is between Greenhead Ghyll and Tongue Ghyll.

**Page 249. "A NARROW GIRDLE OF ROUGH STONES AND CRAGS."**

The Coleridges remained at Dove Cottage until Greta Hall, at Keswick, was ready for them in July.

The scene of the poem is easily identified, although no woodland path now leads from the cottage to the lake, and the coach road and cottages break the privacy of the "eastern shore." On the 10th of October, Dorothy's Journal says: "William sat up after me writing 'Point Rash Judgment.'"

**Page 250. TO M. H.**

Dorothy writes to Mrs. Marshall, Sept. 10: "Our cottage is quite large enough for us, though very small. . . . We have a boat on the lake, and a small orchard and a small garden; which, as it is the work of our own hands, we regard with pride and partiality." The cottage contained only six rooms, and with the Coleridges, the Hutchinsons and John, they must have been a bit crowded. Mary Hutchinson was with them for several months during this year, and the Coleridges for two.

Of the exact location of the scene of the poem it may still be said, "the travellers know it not," although many attempts have been made to ascertain it. The place is near Rydal Mount or in the grounds of Rydal Park, and a hunt for it will well repay one.

**Page 251. THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.**

There are three roads from Grasmere to Rydal: one, a footpath under Nab Sear, which Dr. Arnold called "Old Corruption;" a second over White Moss Common, which he called "Bit by Bit Reform;" and a third, the coach road by the lake-side, "Radical Reform." It is by the first of these roads that the scene of

this poem is laid. Eglantines still grow there, though not abundantly.

Friday, April 23, 1802, Dorothy writes in her Journal: "We went toward Rydal under Nab Sear. The sun shone and we were lazy. . . . Coleridge and I pushed in before. We left William sitting on the stones, feasting with silence, and I sat down upon a rocky seat, a coach it might be, under the Bower of William's 'Eglantine.'"

**Page 252. THE OAK AND THE BROOM.**

Wordsworth's note helps us to determine the locality under Nab Sear, near the mountain path, "Old Corruption." There is still a large stone far up on the side of the mountain, and it may be the "lofty stone" of this poem.

**Page 253. HART-LEAP WELL.**

Suggested to Wordsworth and his sister when they were making the memorable journey from Sockburn to Grasmere in December, 1799. In 1887 I visited the scene here described and found a desolate spot indeed.

"More doleful place did never eye survey."

The aspens and stone pillars are no more, but the stone basin still remains. A wall has been built where it is possible that the "pillars" stood. Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, who visited the place in 1883, thinks the stone in the wall, which shows signs of having been hammered, may be one of the "pillars."

**Page 257. THE CHILDLESS FATHER.**

Line 10. *funeral basin*. In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of boxwood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this boxwood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased. W. W.

**Page 257. RURAL ARCHITECTURE.**

The scene of this poem is associated with Lake Thirlmere, Great How being the height which rises between Thirlmere and Legberthwaite Dale. See note to "The Waggoner."

**Page 258. ELLEN IRWIN.**

See Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. p. 98, for the history of the famous ballad "Fair Helen of Kierconnell."

Sept. 10, Dorothy writes to a friend: "William is going to publish a second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* with a second volume." These were published at the close of this year, with the famous *Defensio* of his principles of poetic diction. Coleridge wrote of these volumes: "I should judge of a man's heart and intellect, precisely according to the degree and intensity of the admiration with which he read these poems."

The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place. W. W.

## Page 260. A CHARACTER.

This is a tribute to Wordsworth's college mate and friend, Robert Jones, with whom he visited France and Switzerland in the college vacation of 1790, and Wales in 1791. To him he dedicated "Descriptive Sketches," 1793.

## Page 261. INSCRIPTIONS:

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE  
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND, DER-  
WENTWATER.

Derwentwater is rich in literary and historical associations. It attracted Gray, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Carlyle, the Arnolds, and Southey. The places here of most interest are the island where Herbert, St. Cuthbert's friend, had his shrine; Cat-Ghyll, the favorite nook of Southey's, and Crag of the Friars whose beauty first inspired Ruskin, and where now stands the simple memorial of that event.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN  
THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUTHOUSE),  
ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE.

There is only one island in Grasmere Lake. It is still a pasture for sheep, and a rude pile still stands there.

## 1801

Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal reveals to us that this year there was much reading of Spenser and Chaucer, and much worry over the condition of Coleridge. The actual poetic output was not large. Wordsworth tried his hand at modernizing Chaucer, and began "The Excursion."

## Page 262. THE SPARROW'S NEST.

The old manor house with garden and terrace-walk at Cockermouth remains essentially as it was in Wordsworth's day. Emmeline is his sister Dorothy. An interesting memorial of the early days of these children has been recently erected in the Park at Cockermouth: a drinking fountain for man and beast surmounted by a bronze statue of a child.

## Page 262. PELION AND OSSA.

How the desire of the poet's heart has become a reality is revealed in the following from James Russell Lowell, alluding to the lake-land, "This Chartreuse of Wordsworth, dedicated to the Genius of Solitude, will allude to its imperturbable calm, the finer natures and the more highly tempered intellects . . . and over the entrance gate to that purifying seclusion shall be inscribed:

Minds innocent and quiet take  
This for an hermitage."

## Page 263. THE PRIORESS'S TALE.

Prof. Dowden calls this work "at once frank and faithful," in spite of its many defects.

Friday, 4th, Dorothy writes in her Journal: "Wm. translating 'The Prioress's Tale.'"

Saturday, 5th, "Wm. finished 'The Prioress's Tale,' and after tea Mary and he wrote it out."

## Page 266. THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

Line 201. *With such a master, etc.* From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also Stanzas xlv. and xlv., which are necessary to complete the sense. W. W.

## 1802

This year is an exceedingly busy one for the poet. A frequent entry in Dorothy's Journal is, "Wm. worked at the Pedlar." The ballads and sonnets are revelations of the life he was living, the most significant event of which was his marriage to Mary Hutchinson.

## Page 273. THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

The title of this poem in Dorothy's Journal is "The Singing Bird." Friday, March 12, she writes: "William finished 'The Singing Bird.'"

## Page 274. ALICE FELL.

Under date of Feb. 16, Dorothy gives a detailed history of the occurrence with Mr. Graham, closing with: "Mr. G. left Mary to buy her a new cloak." On Friday (March 14), Dorothy writes, "In the evening after tea William wrote, 'Alice Fell.'"

## Page 275. BEGGARS.

Under date of May 27, 1800, Dorothy gives details of the event out of which the poem grew, and under Saturday (March 13, 1802) she writes: "W. wrote the poem of the Beggar Woman." The quarry is near the junction of the two roads leading from Rydal to Grasmere. See "Sequel to the 'Beggars,'" 1817.

## Page 276. TO A BUTTERFLY.

This poem refers to the same period as "The Sparrow's Nest," Cockermouth days, before 1778. Dorothy says: "While we were at breakfast W. wrote the poem 'To a Butterfly.' The thought came upon him as we were talking about the pleasure we both always felt at the sight of a butterfly. I told him that I used to chase them a little, but that I was afraid of brushing the dust off their wings, and did not catch them."

## Page 276. THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.

March 16 Dorothy writes: "William went up into the orchard and wrote a part of 'The Emigrant Mother.'" "Wednesday. — William went up into the orchard and finished the poem."

## Page 277. "MY HEART LEAPS UP."

This poem is the key-note of all Wordsworth's poetry: it is "The Prelude" condensed into a lyric.

Page 278. WRITTEN IN MARCH.

Under date of April 16 (Good Friday), Dorothy writes in the Journal the details of their walk from Ullswater over Kirkstone Pass, during which this poem was composed. A little below Hartsteep in Patterdale is the bridge over Goldrill Beck.

Line 10. Dorothy says (in Journal): "Behind us a flat pasture with forty-two cattle feeding."

Page 278. THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY.

On Sunday, April 18, Dorothy writes: "A mild grey morning with rising vapours. We sat in the orchard. William wrote the poem on the Robin and the Butterfly." "Tuesday 20, wrote a conclusion to the poem of the Butterfly, 'I've watched you now a full half hour.'"

Line 12. *Father Adam*. See "Paradise Lost," book xi. W. W.

Page 279. FORESIGHT.

On January 31, Dorothy says: "I found a strawberry blossom in a rock. . . . I uprooted it rashly, and felt as if I had been committing an outrage; so I planted it again."

Under date of 28th of April she writes "Wm. was in the orchard. . . . at dinner time he came in with the poem, 'Children gathering Flowers.'"

Page 279. TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.

In Dorothy's Journal, April 30, we have the following: "We came into the orchard directly after breakfast, and sat there. The lake was calm, the sky cloudy. W. began to write the poem of the Celandine. . . . I walked backward and forward with William. He repeated his poem to me."

Line 8. *Celandine*. Common pilewort. W. W.

Page 280. TO THE SAME FLOWER.

In Dorothy's Journal, May 1, 1802, is the following: "Wm. wrote the Celandine, second part."

Page 280. RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

Dorothy writes: "When Wm. and I returned from accompanying Jones, we met an old man almost double. . . . His trade was to gather leeches. . . . It was late in the evening."

We see from the Fenwick note that the elements which were gathered together in this poem were from various sources. The mental mood and "the hare running races" in her ninth are brought from the walk over Barton Fell. The "lonely moor" with the "pool" is White Moss Common, which one crosses by the middle road to Rydal.

After the storm and the tumult of Nature — "the roaring of the wind," and the driving of the floods — there came the calm, the singing of the birds, the music of the becks, the fresh,

clear atmosphere, and "the hare running races." One would think that —

"A poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company."

A kindred mood is awakened in the poet, but it is soon bedclouded with "fears and fancies" which arise from the contrast existing between the free, happy, careless life of all the unoffending creatures of God's love, and the life of man, burdened with care for the morrow, obliged to sow before he can reap, "looking before and after." Strong as he is, he is nevertheless made weak by such dejection; and in this weakness there appears the figure of an old man, by conversation with whom strength is imparted, power is given, a new motive for living is supplied, life is made a happier and a diviner thing.

As to style, we might almost say there is none. By the simplest language, in the absence of all color, with no complexity of incident, we have one of the most harmonious and determined of sketches, — the beauty and the strength of repose.

In its ethical bearing the poem makes common cause with all of Wordsworth's best work, the message of which is "Waste not!" That his philosophy in this respect is not theoretical but practical, we will let one who has made a trial of it testify.

John Stuart Mill, in a time of disappointment at the failure of cherished hopes, and when life seemed nothing but a struggle against cruel necessity, went to Wordsworth's poems, and of the result says —

"From them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed. And I felt myself at once better and happier as I came under their influence."

Page 282. "I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ."

In the sphere of the sonnet among modern writers, Wordsworth's work is by far the most significant, not only in the nature and variety of the subjects treated, but also in the manner of composition. He restored the sonnet to the place it held in Milton's time. The style of the sonnet was at the farthest remove from the style of "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," and it is not a little remarkable that one who possessed such wealth of thought and such fluency of language should have been content

"Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground."

But Wordsworth "had the tonic of a wholesome pride;" he was a most careful writer and was exceedingly frugal in his literary economy; these were the prerequisites for success with the sonnet. The care which he exercised in pruning, recasting, and correcting his workmanship is seen in the frequent alterations of the text; many of them cover the period of a lifetime, and preserve for us the changing moods of the poet's mind.

May 21, Dorothy writes: "W. wrote two

sonnets on Buonaparte after I had read Milton's sonnets to him." Here is the seed plot out of which sprang that series of noble utterances on independence and liberty. This series was reprinted by Mr. Stopford Brooke in 1897, "on behalf of the Greek struggle for the Independence of Crete," and, as he informed me, for use in the English schools. Senator Hoar has said of Wordsworth's work here: "More than any man of his time, statesman, philosopher, or poet, he saw with unerring instinct into the great moral forces that determine the currents of history."

Page 283. A FAREWELL.

The series of events, so natural and homely in the life of the poet, which we have thus far considered finds its significant and inevitable crown in that which this poem anticipates. The Wordsworth and Hutchinson families, both of Cumbrian stock, had been a long time intimate. Dorothy and William Wordsworth and Mary Hutchinson had been in the same Dame's School at Penrith and the friendship formed there naturally ripened into that love which enriched and beautified their lives. In 1800 the Hutchinsons left Soekburn and went to Gallow Hill near Scarborough. Dorothy's Journal from July 9 to December is rich in material regarding the events of the remaining months of the year. William and Dorothy went to Gallow Hill by way of Keswick, Greta Bridge and Yorkshire Moors. From Keswick Coleridge accompanied them six or seven miles. Dorothy says (Thursday, 15th), "Met Mary and Sara seven miles from G. H. . . . Arrived at Gallow Hill at seven o'clock."

For the contrasted feelings of Coleridge read his "Dejection: An Ode," written at this time, and published on the day of Wordsworth's wedding.

Page 284. "THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN SET."

June 8, Dorothy writes in her Journal: "W. wrote the poem 'The Sun has long been set.'"

Page 284. COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

This and the following sonnets of the year were composed during the time which elapsed between his arrival at Gallow Hill and his marriage. This interval was spent by himself and Dorothy on a visit to France. Dorothy writes: "On Thursday morning 29, we arrived in London. We left London on Saturday morning at half-past five or six, the 30th. We mounted the Dover coach at Charing Cross. It was a beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river, and a multitude of little boats made a most beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge. The houses were not overhung by their cloud of smoke, and they spread out endlessly, yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a fierce light, that there was something like the purity of one of Nature's own grand spectacles."

These sonnets are the highest type of Wordsworth's pure style; all the elements are so fused that there is nothing to divert attention from the single sentiment pervading the whole.

Page 284. COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, August 1802.

Dorothy writes: "Arrived at Calais at four in the morning of July 31. Delightful walks in the evenings, seeing far off in the West the coast of England, like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the Evening Star, and the glory of the sky."

Page 285. COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARRÈS.

Line 1. *Joins! as from Calais southward.*

(See Dedication to "Descriptive Sketches.")

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college, and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic Country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude, which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption, and, while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasant sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the sonnet entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 602. W. W.

Line 3. *day.* Fourteenth of July, 1720. W. W. See "A Character," p. 260, and note.

Page 286. THE KING OF SWEDEN.

In this and a succeeding sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles AVOWED IN HIS MANIFESTOS; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous, and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished. W. W.

Page 288. COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

On their return from France, Aug. 30, they spent three weeks in London, and reached Gal-

low Hill Sept. 24. Dorothy writes: "Mary first met us on the avenue. She looked so fat and well that we were made very happy by the sight of her; then came Sara, and last of all Joanna. Tom was forking down, standing upon the corn cart."

On Monday, Oct. 4, Wordsworth was married to Mary Hutchinson, in the old church at Brompton, and set out on the return to Dove Cottage the same day. Dorothy's entry in the Journal for this day (too long to give here) should be read.

Page 288. STANZAS WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S "CASTLE OF INDOLENCE."

Dorothy writes: "We arrived at Grasmere at about six o'clock on Wednesday evening, the 6th of October, 1802. . . . I cannot describe what I felt. . . . On Friday, 8th, Mary and I walked first upon the hillside, and then in John's Grove, then in view of Rydale, the first walk that I had taken with my sister." Thus the circle at Grasmere was widened and enriched; now two high-minded and loving women, through their own sweetness and purity, calmness and goodness, contribute to make his work reach a height of fullness and completion only dreamed of as yet. I am inclined to think that the characters alluded to in this poem are Wordsworth and Coleridge; although there is some difficulty in assigning the stanzas. The editor of the *Memoirs* concludes that the allusions in the first four stanzas are to Wordsworth, and those in the last three to Coleridge.

Page 290. TO H. C.

These lines, which Mr. Walter Bagehot styles, "the best ever written on a real and visible child," refer to Hartley Coleridge, the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They are singularly prophetic of that life of dreamy waywardness, of lonely wanderings, of lofty hopes and deep despair which was to be his. The gift of continuous conversation which distinguished his father was his no less, and it won for him hosts of friends. He became the ward of Wordsworth, who never ceased to care for him. He is known in the Lakes as "The children's laureate." His body lies in Grasmere Churchyard, near that of his friend and benefactor, Wordsworth.

Nab Cottage, where Hartley lived and died, is on the coach road from Rydal to Grasmere, and faces Rydal Water. It is now a favorite lodging house in the Lake District. See lines 43-64 in S. T. Coleridge's "Fears in Solitude."

Page 290. TO THE DAISY.

This Poem, and two others to the same flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a Poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgom-

ery's, entitled, "A Field Flower." This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets:—

"Though it happe me to rehersin—

That ye han in your freshe songis saied,  
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaled,  
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour  
Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour."

W. W., 1807.

The best expression of the spirit of Wordsworth's Nature poems—like this and the two following—is to be found in Whittier's tribute to Wordsworth,—

"The violet by its mossy stone,  
The primrose by the river's brim,  
And chance-sown daffodil have found  
Immortal life through him.

"The sunrise on his breezy lake,  
The rosy tints his sunset brought,  
World-seen, are gladdening all the vales  
And mountain-peaks of thought."

Line 80. *Art Nature's favourite.* See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to the flower. W. W.

Ruskin in *Modern Painters*, "Imagination Contemplative," cites the third and fifth stanzas as illustrations of "fancy regardant," and the sixth of "heavenly imagination."

1803

Page 292. THE GREEN LINNET.

The "orchard seat" was upon the terrace at the rear of the garden, and was reached by stone steps cut by Wordsworth himself. At the present time an arbor stands there.

Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xxii., cites this poem as an illustration of "The perfect truth of Nature in his [Wordsworth's] images and descriptions as taken immediately from Nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of Nature."

Page 292. YEW-TREES.

Written at Grasmere. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude. W. W.

At this time Wordsworth was at work upon "The Prelude" and "The Excursion."

Coleridge, in challenging for Wordsworth the gift of imagination (and citing this poem), says: "In imaginative power he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton, yet in kind perfectly unborrowed and his own."

Ruskin, alluding to this poem, in *Modern Painters*, says: "I consider it the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted."

The "pride of Lorton Vale" has lost its beauty and its grandeur, and in 1883 the "fraternal Four" were visited by a whirlwind

which uprooted and despoiled them. The largest yews in the district are now those of Yewdale. See "The Prelude," i. 306.

Page 294. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

The year 1803 was made memorable by the visit of Wordsworth, his sister, and Coleridge, to Scotland. Wordsworth had been born and reared in sight of "the land of song," yet not until this year had he set foot upon her soil. Dorothy's Journal is a record of this journey, and is hardly less poetical than the immortal poems. In my various visits to Scotland I have found the Journal the best guide to these localities.

Page 294. DEPARTURE.

Prof. Dowden thinks this was written in 1811, although it refers to events in 1803.

Dorothy's Journal says: "William and I parted from Mary on Sunday afternoon, Aug. 14, 1803; and William, Coleridge, and I left Keswick on Monday morning, the 15th."

Page 294. AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

The party reached Dumfries on the evening of the 17th. Under date of Thursday, the 18th, Dorothy wrote: "Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. . . . He lies at a corner of the churchyard, and his son Francis Wallace beside him. . . . We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses:—

'Is there a man whose judgment clear  
Can others teach the course to steer,  
Yet runs himself life's mad career  
Wild as the wave?—  
Here let him pause and through a tear  
Survey this grave.'

Page 295. THOUGHTS SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF THE NITH.

The following is extracted from the journal of my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know, I have been obliged on other occasions:— [W. W.]

"DUMFRIES, August 1803.

"On our way to the churchyard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation; the front whitewashed; dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There,' said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr.'— (I have forgotten the name)— 'a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns

made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph:—

'Is there a man,' etc.

"The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes, obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, etc. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time by the sea-shore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour. The walls were coloured with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right—his farm-house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot.

"I cannot take leave of this country which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighbourhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say,—

'Scruffel, from the sky

That Annandale doth crown, with a most amorous eye  
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,  
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten him.'

"These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying,—

'If Skiddaw hath a cap  
Scruffel was well of that.'

"We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions; indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."

What could be more fitting than that the first-fruits of this visit to Scotland should be dedicated to the memory of that poet who had taught Wordsworth

"How verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth?"

These poems of his written in Burns's favorite metre are the finest tribute ever paid to that "darling of the Muses."

#### Page 297. TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

The tourists had the usual experience with Scottish weather, and when they left Loch Katrine for Loch Lomond it rained almost continually; the Journal for the 28th has the following:—

"When beginning to descend the hill toward Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry until evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful: and the figures of both of them, in gray plaids falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them." Long after his return Wordsworth wrote this poem in recollection of the experience at the ferry-house.

#### Page 298. GLEN-ALMAIN.

On leaving Dunkeld for Callander they concluded to go by Crieff, as the "Sma' Glen" would be on their way.

"September 9. We entered the glen at a small hamlet at some distance from the head, and turning aside a few steps ascended a hillock which commanded a view to the top of it,—a very sweet scene, a green valley, not very narrow, with a few scattered trees and huts, almost invisible in a misty gleam of afternoon light. The following poem was written by William on hearing a tradition relating to it." — *Journal*.

#### Page 298. STEPPING WESTWARD.

From Callander they went to Loch Katrine. "We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening. Ben Lomond and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond were very majestic under the clear sky, the lake perfectly calm, and the air sweet and mild. The sun had been set for some time, when our path having led us close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly dressed women, without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening's walk. One of them said to me in a friendly, soft tone of voice, 'What! are you stepping westward?' I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front, yet glowing with the departing sun. William wrote this poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine." — *Journal*.

#### Page 298. THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Having crossed Loch Lomond they continued their journey through Glenfalloch and Glen-gyle, along the side of Loch Voil between the braes of Balquidder and Stratheyer, and returned to Callander. Of the scenery by Loch

Voil Dorothy says: "As we descended, the scene became more fertile, our way being pleasantly varied,—through coppice or open fields, and passing farm-houses, though always with an intermixture of uncultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields were quietly—might I say pensively?—enlivened by small companies of reapers. It is not uncommon in the more lonely parts of the Highlands to see a single person so employed. This poem was suggested to William by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson's *Tour in Scotland*."

#### Page 299. ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE.

Soon after leaving Loch Lomond, Coleridge parted with the Wordsworths, and they passed on to Inverary and by Loch Awe to Dalnally.

Not far from the spot where Wordsworth poured out these verses is now to be seen a monument of rude unhewn stones cemented together. This monument has been erected to the memory of Duncan MacIntyre, the Bard of Glenorchy—Fair Duncan of the Songs. He lived on the lands of the Earl of Breadalbane, by whose family Kilchurn Castle had been built.

Line 43. *Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades*. The tradition is that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine. W. W.

#### Page 301. SONNET COMPOSED AT — CASTLE.

On returning from the Highlands they spent a day in Edinburgh and then went to Roslin. On the morning of Sept. 17 they walked to Lasswade, and met, for the first time, Walter Scott, who was living there. In the afternoon Scott accompanied them to Roslin and left them with the promise to meet them at Melrose two days after. Passing on to Peebles they traveled down the Tweed, past Neidpath Castle.

#### Page 301. YARROW UNVISITED.

The Journal has the following: "September 18. We left the Tweed when we were within about a mile and a half or two miles of Clovenford, where we were to lodge. Turned up the side of a hill and went along the sheep-grounds till we reached the spot,—a single stone house. On our mentioning Mr. Scott's name the woman of the house showed us all possible civility. Mr. Scott is respected everywhere; I believe that by favour of his name one might be hospitably entertained throughout all the borders of Scotland.

"At Clovenford, being so near to Yarrow, we could not but think of the possibility of going thither, but came to the conclusion of reserving the pleasure for some future time, in consequence of which, after our return, William wrote the poem which I shall here transcribe."

The three poems upon the Yarrow, written in the metre of the old Yarrow ballads, should

be read as a trilogy, and Wordsworth's earlier and later styles compared.

"He hoarded his joys and lived upon the interest which they paid in the form of hope and expectation." — R. H. HUTTON.

Line 35. See Hamilton's ballad, "The Braes of Yarrow," line 50.

Page 302. **THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.**

After leaving Clovenford they proceeded to Gala Water and on to Melrose, where they were met by Scott, who conducted them to the Abbey. The next day they went to Jedborough, where Scott, as "Shirra," was attending the Assizes. The inns being full, they secured lodgings in a private house. The Journal continues: "We were received with hearty welcome by a good woman who though above seventy years old moved about as briskly as if she were only seventeen. The alacrity with which she guessed at and strove to prevent our wants was surprising. Her husband was deaf and infirm, and sat in a chair with scarcely the power to move a limb, — an affecting contrast! The old woman said they had been a very hard-working pair; they had wrought like slaves at their trade, — her husband had been a currier; she told me they had portioned off their daughters with money, and each a feather bed.

"Mr. Scott sat with us an hour or two, and repeated a part of the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' When he was gone, our hostess came to see if we wanted anything, and to wish us good-night. William long afterward thought it worth while to express in verse the sensations which she had excited."

Page 303. "FLY, SOME KIND HARBINGER."

This was composed the last day of our Tour, between Dalston and Grasmere. W. W.

The next day, Scott being busy at the courts, William Laidlaw, who lived in the dale of Yarrow, and who had been delighted with some of Wordsworth's poems, accompanied them to the vale of Jed. Dorothy says of him: "At first meeting he was as shy as any of our Grasmere lads, and not less rustic." On the following day Scott was glad to leave the Judge and his retinue and travel with them through the vale of Teviot to Hawick, from which place they had an extensive view of the Cheviot Hills. Here they were obliged to part, as Scott had to return to his duties. Two days later the Journal has the following: "Arrived home between eight and nine o'clock, where we found Mary in perfect health, Joanna Hutchinson with her, and little John asleep in the clothes-basket by the fire."

Page 308. **THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.**

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of "The Reverie of Poor Susan," p. 70; and see (to make up the deficiencies of this class) "The Excursion," *passim*. W. W.

1804

This year much of "The Prelude" was written.

Page 310. **TO THE CUCKOO.**

Composed in the orchard at Town-End, Grasmere, 1804. W. W.

If, as Prof. Dowden thinks, the following from Dorothy's Journal refers to this poem, the date should be 1802. She writes (May 14, 1802): "William tired himself with seeking an epithet for the Cuckoo."

Of all Wordsworth's illustrations of the effect of sound upon the spiritual nature this is the finest. "Of all his poems," Mr. R. H. Hutton says, "the 'Cuckoo' is Wordsworth's own darling."

Page 311. "SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT."

That so trivial an incident as the meeting of this Highland maid should have been thus cherished by the poet, and reproduced here, and in the "Three Cottage Girls," written nearly twenty years after, shows us how he valued his experiences.

It is hardly necessary to say that the subject of the poem is Mrs. Wordsworth. Allusions are also made to her in "The Prelude," book vi. 224; xii. 151; xiv. 206; and in "A Farewell," "To M. H.," "O dearer far than light and life are dear," 1824.

Page 311. "I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD."

Town-End, 1804. The two best lines in it are by Mary. W. W.

The incident upon which this poem was founded occurred during a walk in Patterdale. Dorothy's Journal says: "When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more, and yet more; and at last under the boughs of the trees we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore. . . . I never saw daffodils so beautiful . . . they tossed and reeled and danced as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake."

Lines 21, 22. These lines were suggested by Mrs. Wordsworth. Daffodils still grow abundantly about Ullswater.

Page 312. **THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET.**

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to inquire of him after her son. W. W.

No poet could have drawn this portrait until



he had lived close to the realities of the humblest lives. As an old dalesman has said of him, "He was a kind mon, there's no two words about that; if any one was sick i' the plaace he wad be off to see til 'em." Thus it was that he entered into the mystery of suffering, and became —

"Convinced at heart, how vain  
A correspondence with the *talking* world  
Proves to the most."

This is a companion picture to the "Story of Margaret" in "The Excursion," the purpose of both being to awaken in us a responsive chord to the sufferings of those about us, to further the culture of the finer feelings.

"Others will teach us how to dare  
And against fear our breast to steel;  
Others will strengthen us to bear;  
But who, ah! who will make us *feel*?"  
MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Page 314. THE SEVEN SISTERS.  
The story of this poem is from the German of Frederica Brun.

Page 315. ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA.

Of Wordsworth's strong and deep love for his children we have frequent evidence in his poems. For Dora he seems to have had the most intense affection, loving her as his own soul. "The Longest Day," written in 1817, is addressed to her. After the sad illness of the dear sister, Dora became his comforter and stay, and occupied in his later life the same position which Dorothy had in his earlier. So dependent upon her did he become, that her marriage was a severe trial for him.

"When, in 1847, death came to her, a silence as of death fell upon him. . . . I believe his genius never again broke into song." — SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

Page 318. AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK.

We are familiar with the gifts of princely merchants, Cottle, Poole, and the Wedgwoods, to Coleridge. This gift to Wordsworth by his patron is equally interesting.

In August, 1806, Wordsworth writes to Sir George Beaumont: "Applethwaite I hope will remain in my family for many generations."

The cottage is now the property of Wordsworth's grandchildren.

1805

This year "The Prelude" was completed.

Page 320. TO A SKY-LARK.

Of all Wordsworth's poems this seems the most inevitable; it is as spontaneous as the lark's own song. The idea that the life of Nature is one of enjoyment, of love and praise to the Almighty Giver, characterizes that spirit of

religious awe in which Wordsworth always walked with Nature.

Page 320. FIDELITY.

Scott first visited Dove Cottage in this year when, with Wordsworth and Sir Humphrey Davy, he climbed Helvellyn and visited the scene of this accident. See Scott, "Helvellyn."

The traveler who ascends Helvellyn and wishes to go to Patterdale, by passing along *Striding Edge* will see the monument now erected there to commemorate this act.

Line 20. *tarn*. A small Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains. W. W.

Page 322. TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

The dog "Music" died, aged and blind, by falling into a draw-well at Gallow Hill. W. W.

Page 322. "WHEN TO THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE BUSY WORLD."

"Wordsworth assigned two dates to this poem. In editions of 1815, 1820, it is 1802; while in the edition of 1836 and later editions, it is 1805." — DOWDEN. I have therefore placed it before those relating to his brother's death.

In the year 1800 the brothers spent eight months together at the Grasmere home; they had seen but little of each other since childhood, and at this time the Poet found in his brother an intense and delicate appreciation of his poetry. In the fir-grove, now called John's Grove, they spent many hours discussing what would be the future of the *Lyrical Ballads*; John Wordsworth confidently believed that they would in time become appreciated, and hence he determined to assist his brother in all possible ways. As captain of a merchant vessel he had acquired some means, had helped furnish the cottage, and looked forward to the time when he could settle at Grasmere, and enjoy the home in company with Dorothy and William.

The fir-grove is not far from the Wishing-Gate on the road over White Moss Common. It is one of the most interesting of the localities connected with the poet and his brother.

See "The Prelude," vii. 43.

Page 324. ELEGIAC VERSES IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH.

When in September, 1800, John Wordsworth left Grasmere, the brother and sister accompanied him as far as Grisdale Tarn, on the way to Patterdale. They then little thought it was to be his farewell to Grasmere, but so it proved. Soon he was appointed captain of the "Abergavenny," an East Indiaman; and on Feb. 5, 1805, when setting sail from Portsmouth, through the incompetence of the pilot, she struck the reefs of the Bill of Portland, and was lost. Wordsworth says: —

"A few minutes before the ship went down my brother was seen talking to the first mate with apparent cheerfulness; he was standing at a point where he could overlook the whole ship

the moment she went down, — dying, as he had lived, in the very place and point where his duty called him."

In execution of the poet's wish, —

"Here let a Monumental Stone  
Stand — sacred as a Shrine," —

the Wordsworth Society has caused lines 21-24, 61-64 of this poem to be engraved upon a stone near the tarn.

Line 52. *Meek Flower. Moss Campion (Silene acaulis)*. This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough, and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of nature living near the places where they grew. W. W.

In 1808 I found the Meek Flower still growing "upon its native bed." See "The Prelude," xiv. 411.

Wordsworth says: "I never wrote a line without the thought of giving *him* pleasure; my writings were his delight, and one of the chief solaces of his long voyages. But let me stop. I will not be cast down; were it only for his sake I will not be dejected."

This faith and fortitude was so strong in Wordsworth that he became a singular example of the power of will to rise above the ills caused by incidents of every-day experience. This is the great moral lesson of his life. See Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library*, vol. ii., "Wordsworth's Ethics."

Page 325. ELEGIAC STANZAS SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE.

Line 1. *I was thy neighbour once*, etc. "Wordsworth had spent four weeks of a college vacation out there, at the house of his cousin, Mrs. Burke." — CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH.

Some have found, or think they have found, in this poem an illustration of *pathetic fallacy*, as Ruskin calls it, — the imposition upon Nature of the poet's own feeling. Let us see; in the first part of the poem the poet views the sea at rest, not as a reflection of his own calm, but because he has been familiar with it, not in storm but in *calm*; he knows its nature as manifested in repose, and hence cannot appreciate the work of art which is at variance with his strongest impression. In the closing part of the poem, he does not violate his philosophy, for now having experienced what the storm at sea can do, the impression of calm is replaced

by that of *storm*, and hence he can supply what before was wanting, and appreciate the artist's work.

The following lines were written by Mary Lamb, and sent to Dorothy on the death of Captain Wordsworth: —

"His voice they'll always hear,  
His face they'll always see;  
There's naught in life so sweet,  
As such a memory."

Peele Castle, on the Isle of Man, was once a residence of the Princes of Mona.

"This painting still hangs in the gallery at Coleorton." — KNIGHT.

In writing to Sir George Beaumont, Aug. 1, 1805, Wordsworth says: "I am glad you liked the verses. . . . It is a melancholy satisfaction to connect my dear brother with anybody whom I love so much."

Page 326. LOUISA.

Prof. Dowden says the following was most unhappily omitted from later editions: —

"And she hath smiles to earth unknown;  
Smiles, that with motion of their own  
Do spread, and sink, and rise,  
That come and go with endless play,  
And ever as they pass away,  
Are hidden in her eyes."

Page 327. TO A YOUNG LADY.

This poem and the one which follows were addressed to Dorothy Wordsworth.

The following is from a letter by Dorothy: —

"He was never tired of comforting his sister; he never left her in anger; he always met her with joy; he preferred her society to every other pleasure."

See *Dorothy Wordsworth*, by Edmund Lee.

Page 327. VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.

See "The Prelude," book ix. 541-585.

This story was evidently the outcome of the illustrations which his friend Beaupuy gave of the tyranny of the noblesse in France, although the Fenwick note gives it another origin. Mr. E. Legouis says: "Beaupuy perceived that his friend was more easily to be captivated through his imagination than by argument, and introduced some moving tale of passion."

Page 331. THE WAGGONER.

The subject of this sketch has an interesting history. On his hooded wagon was the sign: "William Jackson, Carrier, Whitehaven to Kendal and Lancaster." Jackson was no common carrier like Milton's, who had no interests aside from his carting. He was a lover of men and books. He was building Greta Hall in 1800 and was contemplating retiring from active business. When Coleridge came north in this year, Jackson, who was introduced to him by Wordsworth, offered him a home with him at the Hall; later this circle was widened by the advent of Southey and his family. Jackson's tomb may be seen in Crosthwaite Church. It

bears his coat of arms: a greyhound above, and below three crescents and stars, with the motto, "Semper paratus."

Charles Lamb, "the scorner of the fields," after various entreaties on the part of Wordsworth and Coleridge, visited the Lakes in 1802, and was won by their charms.

He was delighted with the dedication of "The Waggoner" to him and wrote: "'The Waggoner' seems to be always open at the dedication. . . . If as you say 'The Waggoner' in some sort came at my call, Oh! for a potent voice to call forth 'The Recluse' from its profound dormitory. . . . You cannot imagine how proud we are here of the dedication. . . . Benjamin is no common favourite."

No poem of Wordsworth's is more minutely connected with the lake land than this. The route described is over White Moss Common (middle road) through Wytheburn, St. John's Vale, to Keswick.

Three other poets have dealt with some aspects of this route of Benjamin: Gray in his *Journal in the Lakes*, Scott, in "The Bridal of Triermain," and Matthew Arnold in "Resignation."

"Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his wagon, he said, 'They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas.'

"The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eyewitness." W. W.

CANTO FIRST. Line 3. *the buzzing dor-hawk*, etc. When the Poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described:—

"The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune,  
Twirling his watchman's rattle about"

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands. W. W.

Line 34. *Now he leaves the lower ground*. Takes the road over White Moss Common.

Line 53. *Dove and Olive-bough*. The sign which used to hang from Dove Cottage when it was a public house.

Line 88. *Swan*. The public house on the right of the road leading from Dove Cottage to Dunmail Raise.

Line 90. *painted*. Of this sign Wordsworth wrote in 1819, "This rude piece of self-taught art (such is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted by a professional production."

Line 168. *Helm-crag*. A mountain of Grassmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arroquhar in Scotland. W. W.

On the terrace at Under Lanerigg, Helm Crag, Wordsworth composed most of "The Prelude."

Line 209. *pile of stones*. Still to be seen on the Raise.

CANTO SECOND. Line 1. *modest House of prayer*. This chapel still stands opposite Nags Head Inn.

Line 22. *Cherry Tree*. This still stands, but is no longer used as a public house.

Line 30. *Merry-night*. A term well known in the North of England, as applied to rural festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing. W. W.

Line 97. *fiddle's squeak*. At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle summons the Rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner. W. W.

CANTO THIRD. Line 28. *Can any mortal clog*, etc. After the line, "Can any mortal clog come to her," followed in the MS. an incident which has been kept back. Part of the suppressed verses shall here be given as a gratification of private feeling, which the well-disposed reader will find no difficulty in excusing. They are now printed for the first time.

"Can any mortal clog come to her?  
It can . . .

But Benjamin, in his vexation,  
Possesses inward consolation;  
He knows his ground, and hopes to find  
A spot with all things to his mind,  
An upright mural block of stone,  
Moist with pure water trickling down.  
A slender spring; but kind to man  
It is, a true Samaritan;  
Close to the highway, pouring out  
Its offering from a chink or spout;  
Whence all, howe'er athirst, or drooping  
With toil, may drink, and without stooping.  
Cries Benjamin, 'Where is it, where?  
Voice it hath none, but must be near.'  
— A star, declining towards the west,  
Upon the watery surface threw  
Its image tremulously imprinted,  
That just marked out the object and withdrew:  
Right welcome service!

#### ROCK OF NAMES!

Light is the strain, but not unjust  
To Thee, and thy memorial trust  
That once seemed only to express  
Love that was love in idleness;  
Tokens, as year hath followed year  
How changed, alas, in character!  
For they were graven on thy smooth breast  
By hands of those my soul loved best,  
Meek women, men as true and brave  
As ever went to a hopeful grave:  
Their hands and mine, when side by side  
With kindred zeal and mutual pride,  
We worked until the Initials took  
Shapes that defied a scornful look.  
— Long as for us a genial feeling  
Survives, or one in need of healing,  
The power, dear Rock, around thee cast,  
Thy monumental power, shall last  
For me and mine! O thought of pain,  
That would impair it or profane!  
Take all in kindness then, as said  
With a staid heart but playful head:

And fail not Thou, loved Rock! to keep  
Thy charge when we are laid asleep."  
W. W.

All the local allusions in this poem are readily recognized by one reading the poem on the route, as given above, except perhaps the "Rock of Names." It was the custom of Coleridge and the Wordsworths to meet beside Thirlmere for their trysting, as it was about halfway between Grasmere and Keswick. On one occasion each member of the party carved his initials on the face of a mountain stone standing beside the road:—

W. W.  
M. H.  
D. W.  
S. T. C.  
J. W.  
S. H.

This stone was preserved from spoliation by the care of Nature; for by the water which came from a little rill on the mountain side the face became covered with moss and lichens so as to conceal the initials. When the city of Manchester gained possession of Thirlmere, and was about to convert it into a reservoir, the rock would have been submerged by the rising water of the lake when it became dammed up, but for the thoughtfulness of Canon Rawnsley, who removed it to higher ground beside the new road.

CANTO FOURTH. Line 17. *murmuring Greta.*  
In the vale of St. John.

Line 19. *Raven-crag.* On the western side of Thirlmere.

Line 21. *Ghimmer-crag.* The crag of the ewe lamb. W. W. This is not easily determined, as no crag now bears that name. Some think it is Fisher Crag.

Line 37. *Nathdale Fell.* The ridge, High Rigg, between Naddle Vale and that of St. John's.

Line 43. *Threlkeld-hall.* The part of this not in ruins is used as a farmhouse.

Line 61. *Castrigg.* Castlerigg, the ridge between Naddle Vale and Keswick.

Page 340. FRENCH REVOLUTION.  
See "The Prelude," xi. 105-144.

#### 1806

Page 340. CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

The death of Nelson, at the moment of victory, touched the whole English nation. It occurred soon after the death of the poet's brother, and in giving voice to his emotion Wordsworth weaver together their memories in an eulogy which for simplicity and power has no equal in the language.

In this poem we have the purest and noblest manifestation of that faith in God and Immortality which characterized Wordsworth as man

and poet. It is this truth, revealed not so much to the eye of reason as to the eye of the soul, which renders the life of men and of nations divine.

Page 342. THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.

The scene of this poem is the old castle near the town of Egremont, on the river Eden, not far from St. Bees.

"This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor."  
W. W.

Page 345. "YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO."

The relative position of the mountains in the district renders the production of echoes a common one. To one rowing upon Grasmere or Rydal Lake the voice is repeated with great variety; while the echoes from the blasting at the quarries remind one of the cannonading effect of thunder in our own Catskills.

Often while on Loughrigg Fells have I heard the voice of the cuckoo from across Rydal Mere. The terrace along the side of Loughrigg is one of the favorite walks. No stone is to be found bearing Dorothy's name, and it is well that it is safe from the hand of the Philistine who has marred so many of these memorials.

Page 346. "NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR 'CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM.'"

Wordsworth felt that there existed prejudices against the sonnet, and that it lay under a slight that was undeserved; he therefore determined to reinstate it in its former place of dignity and power.

Line 346. *Furnace-fells.* The hills west of Windermere, south of the Brathay and east of the Duddon. Furness Abbey was the centre of the ecclesiastical district known as Furness.

The note of liberty as developing under restraint is a common one in Wordsworth's poetry. See "Ode to Duty."

Sir Henry Taylor says: "It may be noted that self-repetition is almost invariably incident to men of genius and constitutes a great element of their power."

Page 346. PERSONAL TALK.

Wordsworth found a new use for the sonnet, and turned its force into fresh channels. While others had addressed several sonnets to the same person, no one until his time had so united a series that, while each sonnet was complete in itself, it at the same time formed a stanza of a larger poem. The four following, entitled "Personal Talk," illustrate this unity, evolution, and completeness.

Wordsworth's domestic life was one of the brightest in the history of literary genius. Free, joyous, and contented in his cottage home—

which was even less pretentious than that of many of the humble dalesmen—he gave to the world an example of “plain living and high thinking.”

Lines 9-12 of Sonnet iv. are cut upon the pedestal of the poet's statue in Westminster Abbey.

Page 347. “BELOVED VALE!” I SAID.  
This refers to Hawkshead.

Page 348. “WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON.”

The first two lines are from Sidney's “Astrophel and Stella,” xxxi.

Page 349. “THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US.”

Line 14. See Spenser: “Colin Clouts Come Home Again,” line 215, “Triton, blowing loud his wreathed horn.”

Page 349. TO SLEEP.

This group of sonnets was evidently suggested by Wordsworth's reading and attempting to translate those of Michael Angelo on this subject.

Page 350. TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

First published in Prof. Knight's edition, 1883.

“These were written in vol. i. of Lord Coleridge's copy of Wordsworth's Poetical Works, ed. 1836-1837.”—DOWDEN. The last four verses are a translation of the Latin by Thomas Warton.

Page 351. TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

See “The Prelude,” xiv. 355-369, and note to “Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree.”

Memorials to William and Raisley Calvert are to be seen in the old Church of St. Kentigern, Crosthwaite, Keswick.

Page 351. “METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOTSTEPS OF A THRONE.”

“The sonnet alluded to in Wordsworth's introductory note to this poem is, ‘Even so for me a Vision Sanctified,’ 1836.”—KNIGHT.

Page 352. LINES COMPOSED AT GRASMERE.

Line 10. “Importuna e grave salma.”—MICHAEL ANGELO. W. W.

Line 17. *A Power*, etc. Charles James Fox, Minister of Foreign Affairs, succeeded William Pitt. He died Sept. 13, 1806.

The description in the first stanza is extremely accurate, for in any of the vales of the district the effect of a sudden shower, even, is such as to produce a unison of voices from the becks, while the position of the mountains causes the sounds to be reverberated, as mentioned in a previous note.

Page 352. NOVEMBER 1806.

Lines 13, 14. “Danger which they fear, and

honour which they understand not.” Words in Lord Brooke's Life of Sir P. Sidney. W. W.

Page 353. ODE, INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

To those familiar with Wordsworth's work before this date, the philosophy of this Ode will seem what in truth it is,—“the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.” The two moods in which the poet is represented are but a reflection of what we have so often seen in his poetry,—the relation of the soul to sense, and the possibility that the former may forget its celestial birth. The subject of the poem—the origin, development, and destiny of the human soul—has seldom been absent from his poetry, but the treatment is in striking contrast to his former methods. The total effect is perhaps the grandest in the literature of the century, so that the term “inspired” is not forced when applied to the poet who could produce such a result.

The chief value of the poem arises from the fact that it never descends to the plane of mere argument; it ever keeps on the high ground of the essential identity of our childish instincts and our enlightened reason. The deepest truths of the soul cannot be argued, they must be *lived*. In the first four stanzas we have the experience of our common humanity. Doomed as we are to go in company with fear and sorrow, “miserable train,”—how are we to prevent ourselves from “wronging” the joy of the life that is about us? The poet, in the next four stanzas, answers the question by reviewing the history of the soul, and tracing the steps by which it reached that stage. He finds that it is because the soul has become centred in the seen and the temporal, and has thus lost its glory and its beauty; it has wellnigh destroyed its spiritual vision. In the concluding stanzas he shows us that this may be regained, and that the melancholy fear may be subdued by a return to those simple ways in which our childhood walked. We must become as little children in this life of the soul, and by blending early intuition and mature reason we shall be able to see into the life of things. Thus it is that the poet teaches better science than the scientist, better philosophy than the philosopher, and better religion than the priest. Every line of the poem is worthy of the closest study.

Lines 67-76. Ruskin cites these lines in *Modern Painters*, “Ideas of Infinity,” as revealing the work of one “whose authority is almost without appeal on all questions relating to the influence of external things upon the pure human soul.”

In October, 1806, the Wordsworths and Sara Hutchinson left Dove Cottage for Coleorton, Leicestershire, to spend the winter at a farmhouse of Sir George Beaumont. While there, Wordsworth planned the grounds of Coleorton Hall and wrote many poems which forever associate him with the historic place. Here Scott and Coleridge visited him. On hearing “The Prelude” recited to him here.

Coleridge wrote that pathetic poem "To a Gentleman." Sir George Beaumont was an artist of repute and a lover of letters. His intimate and helpful relations to Wordsworth and Coleridge will be found recorded in *Memoirs of Coleridge*.

Page 356. THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

In 1802 Napoleon crushed out the liberties of Switzerland, in 1807 he was master of Europe, and was making gigantic preparations to invade England.

Page 356. TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

Clarkson's work began when he selected his subject for his Latin essay at St. John's College, Cambridge: "Anne liceat invitò in servitutem dare?" From that time he devoted himself to the abolition of the slave trade. The most powerful opposition arose against him, and not until the accession of Fox, in 1806, did the cause gain advantage in Parliament; in March, 1807, the Government declared the slave trade illegal.

Clarkson lived from 1795 to 1806 at Eusmere, near Ullswater, where the Wordsworths were frequent guests.

Page 357. THE MOTHER'S RETURN.

The Fenwick note here is incorrect, as the poem was written at Coleorton by Dorothy, when Wordsworth and Mary were in London.

"Mrs. Wordsworth has a strong impression that 'The Mother's Return' was written at Coleorton, where Miss Wordsworth was then staying with the children, during the absence of the former." W. W.

Page 358. TO LADY BEAUMONT.

Many memorials of Wordsworth's skill as a landscape artist are to be seen in the grounds at Coleorton.

Page 358. "THOUGH NARROW BE THAT OLD MAN'S CARES."

Line 10. *Seven Whistlers*. A kind of weird sisters, according to the old tradition.

Line 12. *Gabriel's Hounds*. Alluding to the cry of wild geese when in flight, which sounds like a pack of beagles in full cry.

Page 359. SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE.

Henry Lord Clifford, etc., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader of English history, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, "in part of revenge" (say the Authors of the *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland*); "for the

Earl's Father had slain his." A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed); but who, as he adds, "dare promise any thing temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this Lord to speak." This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; "for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this (say the *Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke*, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born), that he was the next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age: and for the small distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vincent, in his *Book of Nobility*, p. 622, where he writes of them all." It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth. — But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York: so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the Poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, "when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles." Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that in the course of his shepherd-life he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles; and we have seen that, after the wars of York and Lancaster, they were rebuilt; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former mag-

nificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, etc. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap., 12th verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grand-mother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader:—"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations. W. W.

Lines 1-4. Brougham Castle is situated on the river Emont, about one mile and a half from Penrith. It is now in ruins. During the last half of the sixteenth century the castle was neglected, and it suffered much as Furness Abbey has suffered,—the stone of which has been used for dwellings. "Brave and bonny" Cumberland during the Border Wars and the Wars of the Roses erected castle after castle, many ruins of which now stand, grim historians of the political life of those days. See "Prelude," vi. 190-220.

Line 7. From first battle of St. Albans, 1455, to battle of Bosworth, 1485.

Line 13. The marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth of York.

Line 27. *Earth helped him with the cry of blood.* This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony, and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers's Collection of English Poets. W. W.

Line 36. *Skipton.* Castle in Yorkshire comprised in the estates of the Cliffords, deserted while the Peasant Lord was attainted. When the dissolution of the Monasteries was followed by insurrection the dispossessed Heads were finally repulsed at Skipton by the Earl of Northumberland.

Line 40. *Pendragon.* Another of the castles of the Cliffords, near the source of the river Eden, Cumberland, destroyed in 1685. Its origin is ascribed to Uther Pendragon, the mighty Briton who withstood so long the ravages of the ruthless Saxons. Tradition says he tried to alter the course of the river to better fortify this castle, but failed.

"Let Uther Pendragon do what he can,  
The river Eden will run as it ran."

Lines 44, 45. Brough Castle on the Hillbeck

stream, which flows into the Eden, and is probably older than the Norman Conquest.

Lines 46, 47. *And she, etc.* Appleby Castle, a ruin since 1565.

Line 54. The mother of Henry Lord Clifford was Margaret, daughter of Lord Vesci.

Line 73. *Carrock's side.* Not far from Castle Sowerby, Cumberland.

Lines 89-92. *Mosedale, etc.* The vale of Mosedale is north of Blencathara (Saddleback), a mountain not far from Keswick. Glenderamaikin rises on the high ground not far from Saddleback.

Lines 94-100. Sir Lancelot Threlkeld concealed the boy on his estates in Cumberland.

In "The Waggoner" we have:—

"And see beyond that hamlet small  
The ruined towers of Threlkeld Hall.  
There at Blencathara's rugged feet,  
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat  
To noble Clifford."

The hall is now a ruin, save one portion used as a farmhouse.

Line 122. *fish.* It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal Fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback. W. W.

Lines 142-145. These lines have a genuine epic ring, and reflect the life of the time—a time filled with the prejudices, the passions, and the pomp of war. The Northern Heights seem to have contributed their full share toward all these. In 1584 we find that Cumberland and Westmoreland furnished "Eight thousand three hundred and fifty horsemen, archers, and billmen." The Kendal men are mentioned with honor at the battle of Flodden—

"There are the bows of Kentdale bold  
Who fierce will fight and never flee."

Wordsworth's Muse loves to range

"Where untroubled peace and concord dwells,"

and seldom does she lead him into the fields of chivalry and romance. In but two instances do we have subjects which would permit of the full epic treatment.

In this poem he does not dwell, as Scott would have done, upon the mustering of the forces, the description of the leaders, the shock of battle, and the deeds of prowess, but upon those qualities of the Shepherd Lord which distinguish him as a man and by which he was endeared to all. The treatment is subjective rather than objective; and in its rapid movement from the *jubilant* at the opening, through the various phases of family fortune, to the slowly moving, meditative stanzas at the close, the poem is representative of that variety of form and feeling of which Wordsworth was master. This is, I take it, what Coleridge means when he says:—

"From no contemporary writer could so

many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are to be found, for their own independent weight and beauty."

Lines 142, 143.

*Armour rusting in his halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls.*

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken all died in the Field. W. W.

Page 361. THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.

Although this poem was begun in 1807 it was some years before it assumed its final form. Wordsworth visited the scene of the poem — the Craven district of Yorkshire — on his return from Coleorton to Grasmere in the summer of 1807.

The events upon which the poem is based occurred in 1589, the twelfth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as given in the old ballad in *Percy Reliques*, "The Rising of the North." The imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots embittered her followers in the north and a plan for her marriage to the Duke of Norfolk and the restoration of the old faith was formed by many of the English nobles, among them the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland. When this was known to Elizabeth she sent Norfolk to the Tower and summoned the Earls to appear at court. But instead of complying the Earls gathered their vassals at Brancepeth Castle in Yorkshire, where they were joined by the head of the ancient family, Richard Norton, and his eight sons. They entered Durham, had mass said, and then set out for York. On their way they laid siege to Barnard Castle, which was held by Sir George Bowes, a follower of Elizabeth. While this was taking place Sussex came against them from York and the insurgents, losing heart, returned towards the Border and the Earls escaped into Scotland. Norton and his sons fell into the hands of Sussex and were put to death. These are the events of the old ballad, but Wordsworth's poem centres its interest about the fate of the Nortons and the old tradition of that sole survivor, Emily with her White Doe.

The scenery surrounding the old Hall, the sanctities of the famous Priory, and the decay of ancient chivalry are impressive to the modern visitor.

"The Poem of 'The White Doe of Rylstone' is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled 'The Rising of the North.' The tradition is as follows: — 'About this time,' not long after the Dissolution, 'a White Doe,' say the aged people of the neighbourhood, 'long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regu-

larly as the rest of the congregation.'" — Dr. WHITAKER's *History of the Deanery of Craven*.

"Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

"Bolton Priory," says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book, *The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven*, "stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

"Opposite to the East window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

"But after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, etc., of the finest growth: on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse. Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simon-seat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

"About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

"This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island — sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

"The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous SKRIP. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basins, or "pots of the Linn," which bear witness to the restless impetuosity



of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like "the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters," heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

"The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite." W. W.

DEDICATION. In this poem the author suggests the kind of interpretation to which the spiritual romance of the White Doe is susceptible.

Line 1. *In trellised shed, etc.* In the garden at Dove Cottage.

Page 362. "*Action is transitory.*" This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago. W. W. These six lines are from "The Borderers," act iii. 405-410.

CANTO FIRST. Line 1. *From Bolton's old monastic tower.* It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge." W. W.

Line 27. *A Chapel.* The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel: and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral. W. W.

This chapel still stands; the rest of the church is a ruin.

Line 34. *Prior's Oak.* At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for 70*l.* According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber. W. W.

The location of the tree is not now known.

Line 58. *A solitary Doe.* A White Doe, say the aged people of the neighbourhood, long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service. W. W., 1713.

Line 126. *She sees a warrior carved in stone.* No record of this can now be found at Bolton. It may have been only a creation of the poet.

Line 170. *It was a solitary mound.* The grave of Francis Norton cannot be found.

Line 236. *When Lady Aëliza mourned.* The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, "The Force of Prayer." W. W.

Line 242. *yon chantry door.* At the East end

of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church, is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and a vault where, according to tradition, the Claphams (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Mauleverers) were interred upright. John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive. W. W.

Line 268. *Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet.* Among these Poems will be found one entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burn and Nicholson's *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland*. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says he "retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

"His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

"For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, etc., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

"In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

"He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23d, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavour to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry, in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited, when dead, at a distance from the place which in his lifetime he loved so well.

"By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland; or at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire."

With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr. Whitaker shows from MSS. that not only alchemy but astronomy was a favourite pursuit with them. W. W.

Line 294. *Barden's lovely quietness*. Barden Tower, at about three miles from Bolton Priory, on west bank of the Wharf.

CANTO SECOND. Line 16. *Banner*. Called the Banner of the Five Wounds.

Line 43. *Rylstone-hall*. Of this there are only a few remains to be seen.

CANTO THIRD. Line 2. *Of Brancepeth*. Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account. W. W.

Line 103. *Raby Hall*. Raby Castle, Durham.

Lines 123, 124. From the old ballad. W. W. Line 131. *Clifford-moor*. Not far from Wetherby.

Line 203. From the old ballad. W. W. Lines 207, 208. *Lord Dacre*. Howard's aid. Naworth Castle in Cumberland has over its entrance the arms of Dacre and Howard.

Line 221. *mutred Thurston*. See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard. W. W.

Line 235. *In that other day of Neville's Cross*. "In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, anno 1466, there did appear to John Fosseer, then Prior of the abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower went to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle: (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty

God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies: And then the said Prior and monks accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanksgiving to God and Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day."

This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance:—

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "The Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made" (which is then described at great length), "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth enclosed, etc., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean WHITTINGHAM, whose wife, called KATHARINE, being a French woman (as is most credibly reported by eyewitnesses), did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques." Extracted from a book entitled *Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery*. It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field. W. W.

CANTO FOURTH. Line 179. *Barnard's Towers*. On the Tees, Yorkshire.

CANTO FIFTH. Line 6. *Norton Tower*. It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories

high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are pretty entire), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch tower." W. W.

Of this only the roofless walls now stand.

CANTO SEVENTH. Line 18. *despoil and desolation*. "After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2d or 3d of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland." From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that "the mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, so called, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium; for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, an island, etc. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey, among the old tenants is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butler to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon." W. W.

Line 157. *Amerdale*. "At the extremity of the parish of Burnsall, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment." — Dr. WHITAKER. W. W.

Line 212. "God us agde." On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, "E. N." for John Norton, and the motto, "God us agde." W. W.

Line 253. *rock-encircled Pound*. Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: "On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the S.W. to the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W., where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, etc., were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow."

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added, has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature. W. W.

For a contrast of the two types of criticism in this great poem, compare Jeffrey's in the *Edinburgh Review*, and Prof. Shairpe's in *Aspects of Poetry*.

1808

Page 382. COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS . . . WRITING A TRACT.

Dove Cottage now became too small for his growing family, and this year Wordsworth removed to Allan Bank, across the lake at the foot of Silver How. At this time he was at work on his pamphlet the "Convention of Cintra," now printed in prose works, vol. i., and "The Excursion."

Page 382. GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN.

This poem was never published by Wordsworth. It appeared in De Quincey's *Memorials of Grasmere*. The parents lost their lives in a snowstorm, on the way from Langdale to Easdale, and six children were left orphans. The Wordsworths found homes for them. April 20, Dorothy wrote Lady Beaumont: "I am happy to inform you that the orphans have been fixed under the care of very respectable people. . . . I am going to transcribe a poem composed by my brother a few days after his return." *Memorials of Coleorton*, ii. p. 53.

1809

Page 383. HOFFER.

The sonnets of this year on the Tyrolese herdsmen — patriots who fought in vain against the French under the leadership of Andrew Hoffer, an innkeeper in the Passeierthal — sound the note of Independence and Liberty which he early learned among the shepherds of his own Westmoreland hills.

Page 384. "AND IS IT AMONG RUDE UNTORTURED DALES."

This and the two sonnets which follow sing the praises of the Spanish patriot, Palafox.

Page 384. "HAIL, ZARAGOZA."

In this Sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer. W. W.

Page 385. "BRAVE SCHILL! BY DEATH DELIVERED, TAKE THY FLIGHT."

Ferdinand von Schill attempted to liberate Germany from the tyranny of Bonaparte, but was killed at Stralsund in 1809.

Page 385. "CALL NOT THE ROYAL SWEDDE UNFORTUNATE."

Gustavus IV., who abdicated in 1809, and went to London. See sonnet "The Voice of Song."

Page 385. "LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVENTURER."

This sonnet on Napoleon is in contrast to that which precedes.

Page 386. "IS THERE A POWER," ETC.

This sonnet evidently refers to Palafox.

# 1810

Page 387. ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

T. Quintius Flaminius, who defeated Philip of Macedon and gave freedom to Greece in 196 B. C., at the celebration of the Isthmian Games.

Page 387. UPON THE SAME EVENT.

Alluding to the fact that the Ætolians after aiding Flaminius at Cynoscephalæ insisted on the expulsion of the Macedonians.

Page 388. O'ERWEENING STATESMEN.

See Laborde's *Character of the Spanish People*; from him the statement of these last lines is taken. W. W.

Page 388. EPITAPHS TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

The nine Epitaphs which follow are from the Italian poet Chiabrera who was born in Savona, 1552.

II. Line 13.

Ivi vivea giocondo ei suoi pensieri  
Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original. W. W.

VIII. Line 15. In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original:—

— e degli amici  
Non lasciava languire i bel pensieri.

W. W.

# 1811

Early in this year Wordsworth removed to the Parsonage opposite the church.

Page 393. EPISTLE TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

In August Wordsworth went to Bootle with his family in order that his children might have a change. They went by way of Red Bank, Loughrigg Tarn and Little Langdale, to Yewdale, and over Walna Sear to the Duddon, thence to Bootle.

Line 59. *Mona's Isle*. Wordsworth in a letter, written from Bootle to Sir George Beaumont Aug. 28, 1811, says: "The Isle of Man is right opposite our window."

Line 189. *that Abode*. Sir George purchased Loughrigg Tarn, intending to build a summer cottage upon it in order to be near Wordsworth a part of the year, but for some reason the cottage was not built, the Tarn was sold and the money given to Wordsworth; he used it to purchase the yew trees which still stand in the Poet's Corner, Grasmere Churchyard.

In July, 1804, Wordsworth wrote Sir George Beaumont: "Loughrigg Tarn is a perpetual mortification to me when I think that you and Lady Beaumont were so near having a summer seat here."

NOTE.—LOUGHRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," so called from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. W. W.

Page 398. ON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE.

This must have been written in 1841, but I place it here, as it should be read with the foregoing.

Page 399. UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE, painted by Sir G. H. Beaumont.

Writing to Sir George Beaumont from Bootle, Aug. 28, 1811, Wordsworth says: "Over the chimneypiece is hung your little picture from the neighbourhood of Coleorton."

## Page 399. INSCRIPTIONS:

## IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON.

Although this poem was written in 1808 it belongs naturally with these Coleorton poems.

The student should read *Memorials of Coleorton*, vol. i, 1805-7, for an account of the work which Wordsworth did for Sir George during these years.

"Although the cedar has yielded to the ravages of time, the inscription still remains on the stone." — KNIGHT.

## IN A GARDEN OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.

Line 8. *This little Niche*. "The niche may still be seen at Coleorton." — KNIGHT.

## WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.

This was written in 1808, but belongs naturally here. In 1811 Wordsworth wrote to Sir George relative to an attempt at recording these lines: "I hope this will do: I tried a hundred different ways, but cannot hit upon anything better."

## FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

Line 4. In 1811 Wordsworth wrote to Lady Beaumont: "Grace Dieu is itself so interesting a spot, and has naturally and historically such a connection with Coleorton, that I could not deny myself the pleasure of paying it this mark of attention."

1812

During this year Wordsworth's life was darkened by the death of little Catherine and Thomas, and not much creative work was done. The estrangement from Coleridge also began at this time.

## Page 401. SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL.

It will be interesting in connection with this poem to read the account of Ruskin's success in reinstating the spinning-wheel in the Lakes as given by Canon Ravensley in his *Ruskin in the English Lakes*.

## Page 401. COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

"This poem refers to the marriage of Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Thomas Hutchinson, to Mary Monkhouse, November 1, 1812." — KNIGHT.

## Page 401. WATER-FOWL.

"This first appeared in 'A Description of the Scenery of the Lakes,' 1823." — DOWDEN. See "The Recluse," book i.

1813

During this year the Parsonage was given up and they settled at Rydal Mount.

## Page 402. VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB.

The Druid-haunted hill of Black Comb is

near Bootle in the south of Cumberland. Here is the scene of Faber's poem "Sir Lancelot."

## Page 403. NOVEMBER 1813.

This poem refers to the victory of the Allied Forces over Napoleon. The *aged Sovereign* was George III.

1814

## Page 403. THE EXCURSION.

"The Excursion" was in process from 1795 to 1814. The story of Margaret in the first book and a few lines at the close of the fourth book took shape at Racedown and Alfoxden, 1795-8. At Dove Cottage and Allan Bank the work was completed, while Coleridge was dictating *The Friend* under the same roof. Dorothy's *Grasmere Journal*, 1801-2, frequently alludes to the poet's care in writing and re-fashioning "The Pedlar," as she always called the poem. She says: "William worked hard on the 'Pedlar';" "Sate up late at the 'Pedlar';" "William worked hard at the 'Pedlar' and tired himself." It was published in quarto in 1814 and octavo 1820. It was upon the quarto that Jeffrey stamped his judicial foot with the exclamation, "This will never do!" . . . adding: "The case of Mr. Wordsworth, we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless; and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism." It is a long way from Jeffrey to Arnold; and in the meantime the point of view in regard to Wordsworth has changed from judicial to sympathetic, so that as Mr. Walter Raleigh says: "To any one who has felt, even remotely, the strange elevation of thought and the lonely strength of emotion that upheld the poet throughout his dealings with this human agony (in the 'White Doe'), the comments of Jeffrey came like the noises of a street brawl breaking in upon the performance of a grave and moving symphony."

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G., etc. See sonnet, "Lowther, in thy majestic Pile are seen," and note.

BOOK FIRST. The local allusions in "The Excursion" refer mainly to places in Grasmere and the vales of Little and Great Langdale. The characters and incidents are in main historical; each is idealized at times to suit the purpose of the poet. Like the rest of Wordsworth's works, "The Excursion" gains much in force and beauty when read in the scenes to which it alludes. The first book has the least of local coloring, and is in many respects the most poetical. The Wanderer, as Wordsworth tells us in the Fenwick note, was one James Patrick, a Scotchman, who lived in the town of Kendal. His grave may be seen in the churchyard at Kendal. To one familiar with *The Prelude*, it will be evident that in creating this character the poet has repeated much of his autobiography; the Wanderer is another Wordsworth.

Lines 1-16. *'Twas summer, etc.* See "Nutting," the scenery of which is at Hawkshead.

Line 53. *market-village.* Hawkshead.

Line 132. *So the foundations of his mind were laid.* See "Prelude," ii.

Line 197. *Such was the Boy, etc.* This is perhaps the most Wordsworthian note in "The Excursion."

Line 250. *The divine Milton.* Charles Lamb, in sending Wordsworth a first edition of "Paradise Regained," wrote: "Charles Lamb, to the best knower of Milton, and therefore the worthiest occupant of this pleasant edition. Jan. 2d, 1820."

Line 341. *much did he see of men.* At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a Character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

"We learn from Cesar and other Roman Writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the Settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilising the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, papist or protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

"It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation.* With all these qualifications, no wonder that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners; and should contribute much to polish the roughness and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to carry the

pack, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes." — *Heron's Journey in Scotland*, vol. i. p. 89. W. W.

Line 370. *He could afford to suffer, etc.* See "Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree," ll. 48-63.

Line 420. *Plain his garb, etc.* A portrait of Wordsworth himself as given by many contemporaries.

Line 511. *"I speak," continued he, "of One," etc.* The local setting here is in the southwest of England — Dorsetshire and Somersetshire. In the incidents and pictures of this wonderful poem we have Wordsworth at his best; there are no theories, no maxims or proverbs for practical use — only the solemn and moving spectacle ministering to the spirit of wonder and awe. Coleridge says of it: —

"I was in my twenty-fourth year when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally, and, while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind by his recitation of a manuscript poem which still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza and tone of style were the same as those of 'The Female Vagrant,' as originally printed in the first volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. There was here no mark of strained thought or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery; and, as the poet bath himself well described in his 'Lines on Re-visiting the Wye,' manly reflection and human associations had given both variety and an additional interest to natural objects, which in the passion and appetite of the first love they had seemed to him neither to need or permit."

BOOK SECOND. The localities in which the scenes of this book are laid may be readily identified although some of the details are baffling. The route taken by the Poet and the Wanderer was that on the west of Grasmere Lake over Red Bank to Ellswater and the vales of Great and Little Langdale.

Line 62. *Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts, etc.* See "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle: " —

"Love he had found in huts where poor men lie," etc.

Line 92. *mountains stern and desolate.* The Langdales.

Line 120. *annual Wake.* Folk festivals, common in the vales then and not yet extinct. Cf. "Prelude," viii. 1-70.

Line 127. *broad hill.* Lingmoor, — which divides Great Langdale from Little Langdale.

Line 155. *In a spot, etc.* Blea Tarn in Little Langdale.

Line 175. *Chaplain.* See Wordsworth's account of the Solitary in the Fenwick note introducing this poem.

Line 213. *That promised everlasting joy to France.* See "The Prelude," ix.

Line 318. *wide vale*. Great Langdale.

Line 324. *A steep ascent . . . dreary plain*. They evidently ascended Lingmoor at its highest point to the Tarn, on its summit.

Line 325. *tumultuous waste*, etc. From the top of Lingmoor many of the mountains of the lakes are visible.

Line 328. *little lowly vale*. Little Langdale.

Line 338. *liquid pool*. Blea Tarn.

Line 339. *one abode*. Blea Tarn house.

Lines 386, 387. *band of rustic persons, etc.* A vivid description of the type of ceremony at that time current in the vales, and even now not altogether extinct in Cumberland and Westmoreland.

Line 404. *wound from crag to crag*, etc. Descending to Blea Tarn Cottage.

Line 420. *a little turf-built seat*. The location of this will give the traveler some trouble; it is evidently near the Ghyll.

Line 638. *the Cottage*. As humble as Dove Cottage at Grasmere. It has three small rooms on lower and four on upper floor. It is used now as a semi-public house.

Line 692. *two huge Peaks*. The Langdale Pikes.

Line 696. *Many are the notes*, etc. One who has been in the Langdales "when the Storm rides high" will never forget how Wordsworth has caught the spirit of the scene in this passage.

Line 741. *The Housewife*, etc. The character of the hostess and all the incidents associated with this episode belong to Patterdale. See Fenwick note.

Nothing like the closing passage in this book is to be found in any other poet. It reveals the truth of Coleridge's fifth characteristic of Wordsworth's work. He says: "Lastly, and pre-eminently, I challenge for this poet the gift of imagination in the highest and strictest sense of the word. . . . In imaginative power he stands nearest of all moderns to Shakespeare and Milton; and yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own."

BOOK THIRD. The scenery of the book is that associated with Blea Tarn and Little Langdale.

Line 14. *How Nature hems you in*, etc. A characteristic of every vale in the district, especially that of Little Langdale. There is no egress except by a single road without a climb.

Line 50. *a semicirque of turf-clad ground*, etc. This description is wonderfully true to the conditions about the Tarn as they are to-day, and careful search will reveal its every detail: "the mass of rock," "the holly," the "softly creeping brook" and the fir trees.

Lines 94-100. Ruskin cites these lines in *Modern Painters*, vol. i., "Truth of open Sky."

Line 112. *Lost in unsearchable eternity!* Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

"Siquid verò Natura nobis dedit spectacu-

lum, in hac tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror; cum ex celssimâ rupe speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterraneæ, hinc æquor cæruleum, illine tractus Alpino prospexi; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facilè præterierim Romanis cunctis, Græciæ; atque id quod natura hic spectandum exhibet, scenæ ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hic elegans aut venustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine suâ et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris æquabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximùm oculorum acies ferri potuit; illine disruptissimam terre faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, concervatas, omni situ inæquali et turbido. Placuit, ex hac parte, Naturæ unitas et simplicitas, et inæxhausta quædam planities; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum et insanæ rerum strages: quas cum intuebar, non urbis alicujus aut oppidi, sed contracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.

"In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed præ cæteris mihi placebat illa, quâ sedebam, rupes; erat maxima et altissima, et quâ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat: quâ verò mare, horrendum præcepit, et quasi ad perpendicularum facta, instar parietis. Præterea tacies illa marina adeò erat lævis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset ad summum ad imum, in illo plano; vel terræ motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divulsa.

"Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxosus specus, euntes in vacuum montem; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus: In hos enim cum impetu remebant et fragore, æstuantis maris fluctus; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quasi ab imo ventre evomuit.

"Dextrum latus montis erat præruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute: sinistrum non adeò neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum: et prope pedem montis rivus limpida aquæ prorupit; qui cum vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios mæandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito perit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eminebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplabundus. Vale augusta sedes. Rege digna: Augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda!" P. 89. *Telluris Theoria sacra*, etc., *Editio secunda*. W. W.

Lines 143-148. *that huge Pile . . . on Sarum's naked plain*. Stonehenge. See "Guilt and Sorrow," p. 19.

Lines 231, 232. *Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop than when we soar*. See Aubrey de Vere, *Wisdom and Truth of Wordsworth's Poetry*, in vol. i., "Essays chiefly on Poetry."

Line 307. *Blow winds of autumn*, etc. See "Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."

Lines 518-532. *On Devon's leafy shores . . . lonely Downs*. Wordsworth here reverts to memories of Stowey with Coleridge. See "Prelude," xiv.

Line 716. *The potent shock I felt*, etc. See "Prelude," ix.

Line 883. *gigantic stream*. The Hudson River.

Line 884. *a city*. New York.

Line 931. *Of Mississippi, or that northern stream*. "A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*."

Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind: he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him: — But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific — and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream — his exultation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, 'These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.' He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues merrily, and acts magisterially: his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars." — From the notes upon "The Hurricane," a Poem, by William Gilbert.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose. W. W.

Line 947. *Muccawiss*. Indian Muckawiss, Whip-poor-will.

BOOK FOURTH. In this book the discussion with the disciple of *Candide* is continued in the solitude of Blea Tarn.

Lines 10-17. *One adequate support*, etc. In these lines Wordsworth reveals that ethical philosophy so often repeated in the shorter poems which is his noblest gift to the world, and in which he is without an equal. Here we have what Coleridge calls his "meditative poetry," a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility. Arthur Hallam, writing from Cambridge to Gladstone at Oxford in 1820 on the great question of Man's relation to God, says: "Let me quote to their purpose the words of my favourite poet; it will do us good to hear his voice, though but for a moment."

He then quotes these lines. See Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 67.

Line 30. *Yet I will praise thee*, etc. Sir Leslie Stephen, who has written a most illuminating essay on Wordsworth's Ethics, says: "The purpose then of the 'Excursion,' and of Wordsworth's poetry in general is to show how the higher faculty reveals a harmony which we overlook when with the Solitary we skim along the surface of things."

Line 111. *What visionary powers*, etc. A reversion here in memory to the experiences revealed in the second book of "The Prelude."

Line 123. *Those fervent raptures are for ever flown*, etc. The half-conscious instincts of youth have passed into enlightened reason through the years that bring the philosophic mind. The identity of the two revelations constitutes Wordsworth's optimism.

Line 130. *'Tis as, by comparison*, etc. See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*. W. W.

Line 197. *not fearing for our creed*, etc. The most significant tribute to the truth of this philosophy has been given by Sir Leslie Stephen. He says: "Other poetry becomes trifling when we are making our inevitable passages through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Wordsworth's alone retains its power. We love him the more as we grow older and become impressed with the sadness and seriousness of life. . . . He is a prophet and a moralist as well as a mere singer."

Line 205. *Alas!* etc. This subject is treated at length in the Ode — "Intimations of Immortality." W. W.

Line 324. *Knowing the heart of man*, etc. The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in Italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man's mind in a time of public commotion.

"Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks  
Of tyrant's threats, or with the early brow  
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes;  
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks  
The storms of sad confusion that may grow  
Up in the present for the coming times,  
Appal not him, that hath no side at all,  
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

"(Although his heart (so near allied to earth)  
Cannot but pity the perplexed state  
Of troublous and distressed mortality,  
That thus make way unto the ugly birth  
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget  
Affliction upon Imbecility:  
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run,  
He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-done.

"And whilst distraught ambition compasses,  
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,



And is deceived : whilst man doth ransack man,  
And builds on blood, and rises by distress ;  
And th' inheritance of desolation leaves  
To great-expecting hopes : He looks thereon,  
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,  
And bears no venture in impiety.

"Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared  
A rest for his desires ; and sees all things  
Beneath him ; and hath learned this book of man,  
Full of the notes of frailty ; and compared  
The best of glory with her sufferings :  
By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
To plant your heart ! and set your thoughts as near  
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear."

W. W.

Line 343. *Up from the creeping plant*, etc. Here is a recognition of the great scientific doctrine of evolution which has revolutionized modern philosophy, and a prophecy that the knowledge it brings leads to love and reverence rather than to skepticism.

Lines 402, etc. *I heard . . . a voice sent forth*, etc. See "Yes, it was the mountain Echo."

Line 489. *Take courage*, etc. These homely lines were made the butt of ridicule by Wordsworth's assailants, but Wisdom is justified of her children, and a century has revealed their significance. They have become the eternal warning of Science.

Line 763. *We live by Admiration, Hope and Love*, etc. Our moral being is built up through the recognition by admiration, hope, and love of those common sights and sounds which are meaningless to the world at large.

Line 851. *In that fair clime*, etc. "No Hellene is old," says the Egyptian priest in Plato, "in mind you are all young."

Line 859. *beardless Youth*. Apollo.

Line 865. *beaming Goddess*. Diana.

Line 910. *good Saint Fillan*. Scott alludes to the Spring of Saint Fillan in Canto i., "Lady of the Lake." There is one at the eastern end of Loch Earn and another at Saint Fillan's on the road to Tyndrum. This is known as Holy Pool.

Line 911. *Saint Giles*. The Church of Saint Giles, High St., Edinburgh, is the Westminster Abbey of Scotland.

Line 977. *Only to be examined*, etc. Wordsworth's continued protest against such a process as an end in itself, apart from a union with the vital soul, has at last justified itself in the judgment of all thinking minds.

Line 997. *Crowned was he*, etc. Voltaire was thus honored at Paris when he was eighty years old.

Line 1146. *And central peace*, etc. These lines illustrate Coleridge's third characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry: "The sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs."

BOOK FIFTH. The scene of this book is in the Vale of Grasmere.

Line 3. *attractive seat*, etc. The tarn where the scene of books iii. and iv. is laid.

Line 12. *sole outlet*. The road leading to the village of Little Langdale.

Lines 29, 30. *Knowledge . . . should . . . have*, etc. Mr. Matthew Arnold as president of the Wordsworth Society in 1883 said: "A monas-

tery is under the rules of poverty, chastity and obedience. He who comes under the discipline of Wordsworth comes under these same rules. Wordsworth constantly both preached and practised them."

Line 80. *a grey church-tower*. This at first thought must be in Little Langdale, but the poet himself says in the Fenwick note that he passes at once to the Vale of Grasmere.

Line 97. *stately House*, etc. This is the Hackett Cottage alluded to in the "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont" —

"High on the sunny hill," etc.

The poet was a frequent visitor here.

Line 131. *village-churchyard*. St. Oswald's, Grasmere.

Line 144. *Not raised in nice proportions*, etc. This description is in almost every detail that of St. Oswald's Church, Grasmere, and applies to it in its present state. Among the "marble monuments" may now be seen the memorial to Wordsworth.

Line 226. *Where sun and shade were inter-mixed*. The oak is no more, but yew trees planted by Wordsworth himself furnish "pleasant awning" not far from the wall on the east of the churchyard where they repaired for their discussion.

Line 411. *How gay the habitations*, etc. See "On Nature's invitation do I come," lines 33-45.

Line 441. *The . . . Pastor*. This character is in the main that of the Rev. Robert Walker, "the wonderful Walker" of Seathwaite Chapel. See Duddon Sonnets.

Line 646. *Or rather, as we stand*.

*Leo*. You, Sir, could help me to the history Of first these graves ?

*Priest*. For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,  
Perhaps I might ; . . .  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;  
Yet all in the broad highway of the world.

*The Brothers*. W. W.

Line 670. *You behold*, etc. Here the poet reverts to the Hackett Cottage again in Little Langdale, and the dark mountain is Lingmoor, as he tells us in the Fenwick note to "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."

Line 917. *streams, whose murmur*, etc. See "Resolution and Independence : " —

"And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters."

Line 975. *And gentle Nature*, etc.

"And suffering Nature grieved that one should die."  
*Southey's Retrospect*. W. W.

Line 978. *And whence that tribute*. The sentiments and opinions here uttered are in unison with those expressed in the following Essay upon Epitaphs, which was furnished by me for Mr. Coleridge's periodical work, *The Friend* ; and as they are dictated by a spirit congenial to that which pervades this and the two succeed-

ing books, the sympathising reader will not be displeased to see the Essay here annexed. W. W.

Line 1012. *Life, I repeat, is energy of love, etc.*

"The cloud of mortal destiny  
Others will front it fearlessly  
But who, like him, will put it by?"

ARNOLD, *Memorial Verses*.

"In the first edition of 'The Excursion,' 1814, Wordsworth printed with his notes the following essay, which first appeared in *The Friend*, Feb. 22, 1810." — J. R. TUTIN.

#### ESSAY UPON EPITAPHS

It needs scarcely be said, that an Epitaph presupposes a Monument, upon which it is to be engraven. Almost all Nations have wished that certain external signs should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among savage tribes unacquainted with letters this has mostly been done either by rude stones placed near the graves, or by mounds of earth raised over them. This custom proceeded obviously from a twofold desire: first to guard the remains of the deceased from irreverent approach or from savage violation; and secondly to preserve their memory. "Never any," says Camden, "neglected burial but some savage nations; as the Bactrians, which cast their dead to the dogs; some varlet philosophers, as Diogenes, who desired to be devoured of fishes; some dissolute courtiers, as Mæcenas, who was wont to say, *Non tumulum curo; sepelit natura relictos*."

"I'm careless of a grave: — Nature her dead will save."

As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon these monuments; in order that their intention might be more surely and adequately fulfilled. I have derived monuments and epitaphs from two sources of feeling, but these do in fact resolve themselves into one. The invention of epitaphs, Weever, in his *Discourse of Funeral Monuments*, says rightly, "proceeded from the presage or fore-feeling of immortality, implanted in all men naturally, and is referred to the scholars of Linus the Theban poet, who flourished about the year of the world two thousand seven hundred; who first bewailed this Linus their Master, when he was slain, in doleful verses, then called of him *CElina*, afterwards *Epitaphia*, for that they were first sung at burials, after engraved upon the sepulchres."

And, verily, without the consciousness of a principle of immortality in the human soul, Man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the remembrance of his fellows: mere love, or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it. The dog or horse perishes in the field, or in the stall, by the side of his companions, and is incapable of anticipating the sorrow with which his surrounding associates shall bemoan his death, or pine for his loss; he cannot pre-conceive this regret, he can

form no thought of it; and therefore cannot possibly have a desire to leave such regret or remembrance behind him. Add to the principle of love which exists in the inferior animals, the faculty of reason which exists in Man alone; will the conjunction of these account for the desire? Doubtless it is a necessary consequence of this conjunction; yet not, I think, as a direct result, but only to be come at through an intermediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or assurance within us, that some part of our nature is imperishable. At least the precedence, in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is unquestionable. If we look back upon the days of childhood, we shall find that the time is not in remembrance when, with respect to our own individual Being, the mind was without this assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death, or even in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation that does not form itself till the *social* feelings have been developed, and the Reason has connected itself with a wide range of objects. Forlorn, and cut off from communication with the best part of his nature, must that man be, who should derive the sense of immortality, as it exists in the mind of a child, from the same unthinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits with which the lamb in the meadow or any other irrational creature is endowed; who should ascribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the child; to an inability arising from the imperfect state of his faculties to come, in any point of his being, into contact with a notion of death; or to an unreflecting acquiescence in what has been instilled into him! Has such an unfoldment of the mysteries of nature, though he may have forgotten his former self, ever noticed the early, obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of children upon the subject of origination? This single fact proves outwardly the monstrousness of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct external testimony that the minds of very young children meditate feelingly upon death and immortality, these inquiries, which we all know they are perpetually making concerning the  *whence*, do necessarily include correspondent habits of interrogation concerning the *whither*. Origin and tendency are notions inseparably correlative. Never did a child stand by the side of a running stream, pondering within himself what power was the feeder of the perpetual current, from what never-wearied sources the body of water was supplied, but he must have been inevitably propelled to follow this question by another: "Towards what abyss is it in progress? what receptacle can contain the mighty influx?" And the spirit of the answer must have been, though the word might be sea or ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image gathered from a map, or from the real object in nature — these might have been the *letter*, but the *spirit* of the answer must have been as inevitably, — a receptacle without bounds or dimensions; — nothing less than infinity. We may, then, be justified in asserting, that the sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and

twin birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring: and we may further assert, that from these conjoined, and under their countenance, the human affections are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which revelation coincides, and has through that coincidence alone (for otherwise it could not possess it) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a hollowness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the spirit, so penetrating and powerful that there could be no notions of the life of love; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow. - If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that Man is an immortal being, and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corpse of an unknown person lying by the seaside; he buried it, and was honoured throughout Greece for the piety of that act. Another ancient Philosopher, chancing to fix his eyes upon a dead body, regarded the same with slight, if not with contempt, saying, "See the shell of the flown bird!" But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a dif-

ferent mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had incited the philosophic Poet to the performance of that pious duty. And with regard to this latter we may be assured that, if he had been destitute of the capability of communing with the more exalted thoughts that appertain to human nature, he would have cared no more for the corpse of the stranger than for the dead body of a seal or porpoise which might have been cast up by the waves. We respect the corporeal frame of Man, not merely because it is the habitation of a rational, but of an immortal Soul. Each of these Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature; feelings which, though they seem opposite to each other, have another and a finer connection than that of contrast. - It is a connection formed through the subtle progress by which, both in the natural and the moral world, qualities pass insensibly into their contraries, and things revolve upon each other. As, in sailing upon the orb of this planet, a voyage towards the regions where the sun sets conducts gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth at its rising; and, in like manner, a voyage towards the east, the birth-place in our imagination of the morning, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our eyes; so the contemplative Soul, travelling in the direction of mortality, advances to the country of everlasting life; and, in like manner, may she continue to explore those cheerful tracts till she is brought back, for her advantage and benefit, to the land of transitory things - of sorrow and of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which commands the thoughts and feelings of the two Sages whom we have represented in contrast, does the Author of that species of composition, the laws of which it is our present purpose to explain, take his stand. Accordingly, recurring to the twofold desire of guarding the remains of the deceased and preserving their memory, it may be said that a sepulchral monument is a tribute to a man as a human being; and that an epitaph (in the ordinary meaning attached to the word) includes this general feeling and something more; and is a record to preserve the memory of the dead, as a tribute due to his individual worth, for a satisfaction to the sorrowing hearts of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living: which record is to be accomplished, not in a general manner, but, where it can, in *close connection with the bodily remains of the deceased*: and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe, are deposited within, or contiguous to, their places of worship. In ancient times, as is well known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities; and among the Greeks and Romans they were frequently interred by the waysides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have attended such a practice. We might ruminate upon the

beauty which the monuments, thus placed, must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature — from the trees, the wild flowers, from a stream running perhaps within sight or hearing, from the beaten road stretching its weary length hard by. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind of the traveller leaning upon one of the tombs, or reposing in the coolness of its shade, whether he had halted from weariness or in compliance with the invitation, "Pause, Traveller!" so often found upon the monuments. And to its epitaph also must have been supplied strong appeals to visible appearances or immediate impressions. lively and affecting analogies of life as a journey — death as a sleep overcoming the tired wayfarer — of misfortune as a storm that falls suddenly upon him — of beauty as a flower that passeth away, or of innocent pleasure as one that may be gathered — of virtue that standeth firm as a rock against the beating waves — of hope — "undetermined insensibly like the poplar by the side of the river that has fed it," or blasted in a moment like a pine-tree by the stroke of lightning upon the mountain-top — of admonitions and heart-stirring remembrances, like a refreshing breeze that comes without warning, or the taste of the waters of an unexpected fountain. These and similar suggestions must have given, formerly, to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it was in unison. — We, in modern times, have lost much of these advantages; and they are but in a small degree counterbalanced to the inhabitants of large towns and cities by the custom of depositing the dead within, or contiguous to, their places of worship; however splendid or imposing may be the appearance of those edifices, or however interesting or salutary the recollections associated with them. Even were it not true that tombs lose their monitory virtue when thus obtruded upon the notice of men occupied with the cares of the world, and too often sullied and defiled by those cares, yet still, when death is in our thoughts, nothing can make amends for the want of the soothing influences of nature, and for the absence of those types of renovation and decay which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind. To feel the force of this sentiment, let a man only compare in imagination the unsightly manner in which our monuments are crowded together in the busy, noisy, unclean, and almost grassless churchyard of a large town, with the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery, in some remote place, and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed. Thoughts in the same temper as these have already been expressed with true sensibility by an ingenious Poet of the present day. The subject of his poem is "All Saints Church, Derby:" he has been deploring the forbidding and unseemly appearance of its burial-ground, and uttering a wish that in past times the practice had been adopted of interring the inhabitants of large towns in the country; —

"Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot  
Where healing Nature her benignant look  
Ne'er changes, save at that lone season, when,  
With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,  
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,  
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgins erst,  
With annual moan upon the mountains wept  
Their fairest gone,) there in that rural scene,  
So placid, so congenial to the wish  
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within  
The silent grave, I would have stayed:

— wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven  
Lay on the humbler graves around, what time  
The pale moon gazed upon the turf mounds,  
Pensive, as though like me, in lonely muse,  
"T were brooding on the dead inhumed beneath  
There while with him, the holy man of Uz,  
O'er human destiny I sympathised,  
Counting the long, long periods prophecy  
Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives  
Of resurrection, oft the blue-eyed Spring  
Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,  
Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer  
The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed  
And I would bless her visit, for to me  
'T is sweet to trace the consonance that links  
As one, the works of Nature and the world  
Of God. —" JOHN EDWARDS.

A village churchyard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth — upon personal or social sorrow and admiration — upon religion, individual and social — upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices, in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother; a friend perhaps inscribes an encomium record-

ing the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand churchyards; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes: first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, "to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all." Such language may be holden without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant; and every man has a character of his own to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us; with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality of virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and least of all do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death — the source from which an epitaph proceeds — of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves, to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellences be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellences are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition. — It will

be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader's mind, of the individual whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images, — circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented. — But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen — no, nor ought to be seen — otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered? — It is truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen: it is truth hallowed by love — the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No; — the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer's mind had remained an im-

pression which was a true abstract of the character of the deceased; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

It suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the main branches of the worth of the deceased be boldly and unaffectedly represented. Any further detail, minutely and scrupulously pursued, especially if this be done with laborious and antithetic discriminations, must inevitably frustrate its own purpose; forcing the passing Spectator to this conclusion,—either that the dead did not possess the merits ascribed to him, or that they who have raised a monument to his memory, and must therefore be supposed to have been closely connected with him, were incapable of perceiving those merits; or at least during the act of composition had lost sight of them; for, the understanding having been so busy in its petty occupation, how could the heart of the mourner be other than cold? and in either of these cases, whether the fault be on the part of the buried person or the survivors, the memorial is unaffecting and profitless.

Much better is it to fall short in discrimination than to pursue it too far, or to labour it unfeelingly. For in no place are we so much disposed to dwell upon those points of nature and condition wherein all men resemble each other, as in the temple where the universal Father is worshipped, or by the side of the grave which gathers all human Beings to itself, and “equalises the lofty and the low.” We suffer and we weep with the same heart; we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, goodwill, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these acknowledgments to our common nature; nor let the sense of their importance be sacrificed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute distinctions in individual character; which if they do not (as will for the most part be the case), when examined, resolve themselves into a trick of words, will, even when they are true and just, for the most part be grievously out of place; for, as it is probable that few only have explored these intricacies of human nature, so can the tracing of them be interesting only to a few. But an epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious: it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits regard; its story and admonitions are brief, that the thoughtless, the busy, and indolent, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired: the stooping old man cons the engraven record like

a second horn-book;—the child is proud that he can read it;—and the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend: it is concerning all, and for all:—in the church-yard it is open to the day; the sun looks down upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite sympathy is bound in this case, more than in any other, to give proof that he himself has been moved, it is to be remembered that to raise a monument is a sober and a reflective act; that the inscription which it bears is intended to be permanent and for universal perusal; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and feelings expressed should be permanent also—liberated from that weakness and anguish of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and which with instinctive decency retires from notice. The passions should be subdued, the emotions controlled; strong, indeed, but nothing ungovernable or wholly involuntary. Seemliness requires this, and truth requires it also: for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted? Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object: resignation in course of time springs up from it as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling the turf with which it may be covered, or gathering round the monument by which it is defended. The very form and substance of the monument which has received the inscription, and the appearance of the letters, testifying with what a slow and laborious hand they must have been engraven, might seem to reproach the author who had given way upon this occasion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of conflicting passion; though the same might constitute the life and beauty of a funeral oration or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the main causes why epitaphs so often personate the deceased, and represent him as speaking from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mortal is introduced telling you yourself that his pains are gone; that a state of rest is come; and he conjures you to weep for him no longer. He admonishes with the voice of one experienced in the vanity of those affections which are confined to earthly objects, and gives a verdict like a superior Being, performing the office of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead him, and whose decision cannot but be dispassionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting, and affliction unsubstantialised. By this tender fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a sedate sorrow, and employ the intervention of the imagination in order that the reason may speak her own language earlier than she would otherwise have been enabled to do. This shadowy interposition also harmoniously unites the two worlds of the living and the dead by their appropriate affections. And it may be observed that here we have an additional proof of the propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions were referred to the consciousness of immortality as their primal source.

I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be cast in this mould preferably to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws which ought to govern the composition of the other may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable, as it admits a wider range of notices; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the *general* ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men in all instances, save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenor of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the *actions* of a man, or even some *one* conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act: and such sentiments dwelt upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed. — The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches in such a place; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration — or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue — or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation — or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power; — these are the only tribute which can here be paid — the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

"What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones  
The labour of an age in piled stones,

Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid  
Under a star-pointing pyramid?  
Dear Son of Memory, great Heir of Fame,  
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thyself a livelong monument,  
And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,  
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die."

BOOK SIXTH. The scene of this book is the Churchyard of St. Oswald, Grasmere.

Line 8. *the spiritual fabric of her Church.* See "Ecclesiastical Sonnets."

Professor Dowden says of Wordsworth: "Underneath the poet lay a North Country statesman." Senator Hour says: "No man of his time, statesman, philosopher, poet, saw with such unerring instinct into the great moral forces that determine the currents of history."

Line 19. *and spires whose 'silent finger points to heaven.'* An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. See *The Friend*, by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223. W. W.

Line 48. *Men, whose delight, etc.* See "Seathwaite Chapel."

Line 97. *A Visitor.* A schoolfellow of Wordsworth's. See Fenwick note to this poem.

Line 235. *our Swain.* This character lived in Patterdale. See Fenwick note.

Line 275. *He lived not, etc.* This character was born and bred in Grasmere. See Fenwick note.

Line 407. *in a petty town.* The story here told was one which the poet heard when a schoolboy from Ann Tyson at Hawkshead. See Fenwick note.

Line 451. *under a borrowed name.* Vandyke. See Fenwick note.

Line 497. *a dial.* There are no records of such a dial at Grasmere Church.

Line 610. *These Dalesmen trust, etc.* See "The Brothers."

Line 625. *Stone lift its forehead emulous, etc.*

"Plain is the stone that marks the Poet's rest;  
Not marble worked beneath Italian skies —  
A grey slate headstone tells where Wordsworth lies,  
Cleft from the native hills he loved the best."

H. D. RAWNSLEY,  
*Sonnets at the English Lakes.*

Line 676. *A woman rests.* She was the poet's neighbor at Town-End. See Fenwick note.

Line 779. *A long stone-seat.* This used to be at the left of the entrance-gate, opposite the Parsonage.

Line 792. *Mother's grave.* The poet says, "Every particular was exactly as I've related." See Fenwick note.

Line 950. *The natural feeling of equality, etc.* "The Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded perhaps as near a realization as human fates have

yet allowed of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's greatness." — F. W. H. MYERS.

Line 1144. *sprung self-raised from earth*, etc. These humble dwellings remind the contemplative spectator of a production of Nature, and may rather be said to have grown, than to have been erected. — WORDSWORTH, *Scenery of the Lakes*.

"All is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty, in its neatest and most becoming attire." — GRAY, *Journal at the Lakes*.

BOOK SEVENTH. The discussion is continued in the churchyard at Grasmere.

Line 7. *Snowdon's sovereign brow*. See "The Prelude," xiv. 1-62.

Line 9. *A wandering Youth*. Alluding to his tour in Wales with his friend Jones in 1790. See "Descriptive Sketches," note.

Line 37. *village-school*. "The schoolhouse used to be near the Lich gate at the west of the churchyard, and the children used that part of the churchyard as a playground, which had not yet been used for burials." — DR. CRADDOCK.

Line 43. *The length of road*, etc. The poet is now looking toward Helvellyn to the east, and the "easy inlet of the vale" is the old Roman road leading to Keswick through the gap in the mountains where the bones of King Dunmail, Cumberland's last king, lie. Hence it is known as Dunmail Raise. See "The Waggoner," canto i. 200-212.

"And now have reached that pile of stones,  
Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones;  
His who had once supreme command,  
Last king of Rocky Cumberland."

Line 55. *lowly Parsonage*. This house still stands on the right of the Raise, beyond the famous Swan Inn. The clergyman and his family were intimate associates with Wordsworth. See Fenwick note.

Line 90. *Fair Rosamond*. Rosamond Clifford, daughter of Walter R. Clifford. She was the mistress of Henry II., poisoned by Queen Eleanor, 1177, and buried at Godstow. *Children of the Wood*. Old English ballad and play.

Line 92. *sage Whittington*. London's famous Lord Mayor.

Line 140. *the chapel stood*.

"Wytheburn's noblest house of prayer,  
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling."

*The Waggoner*

This chapel stands on the right of the road, opposite "Nag's Head Inn." Just beyond the chapel now stands a memorial to Matthew Arnold. It was from Nag's Head that the party set out as recorded in his "Resignation," which contains some striking Wordsworthian lines: —

"And now, in front, behold outspread  
Those upper regions we must tread!  
Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells,  
The cheerful silence of the fells."

Line 171. *Was trimmed and brightened*, etc. Much of this description applies equally well to Dove Cottage, where the poet lived, and to the older type of houses in the vale.

Line 260. *neek Partner of his age*. Mrs. Symson died Jan. 24, 1806, aged 81.

Line 285. *Death fell upon him*, etc. He was found dead in his garden across the road on June 27, 1807, in his ninety-second year. Canon Rawnsley says: "Just such another clergyman was the late Vicar of Wytheburn, who died in 1892."

Line 291. *Were gathered to each other*. The burial-place of the Symsons may be seen in Grasmere Churchyard, not far from that of the Poet's Corner, where Wordsworth and his family are buried.

Line 316. *A Priest abides*. See note to "Seathwaite Chapel."

Line 348. *Behind yon hill*. If the speaker is in Grasmere Churchyard, Seathwaite would be beyond several hills; but the Fenwick note alludes to the cottage "called Hackett," between the two Langdales, hence the hill is that between Langdale and the Duddon.

Line 352. *A simple stone*, etc. The Chapel and Parsonage have been remodeled, and the simple stone has been turned over and a fresh inscription cut.

Line 400. *a gentle Dalesman lies*. Not at Grasmere, but at Hawes-Water. See Fenwick note.

Line 405. *Soundless, with all its streams*. Wordsworth's delicate sense of sound is everywhere revealed in his poetry. See "Wordsworth's Treatment of Sound," by W. A. Heard, *Wordsworthiana*.

Line 413. *lofty crags*. The Helvellyn range.

Line 595. *his doings leave me to deplore tall ash-tree*, etc. "I 'member there was a walling chap just going to shoot a girt stoan to bits wi' powder in the grounds at Rydal, and Wordsworth came up and saaved it, and wrote summat on it." — *Reminiscences of Wordsworth among the Peasantry of Westmoreland*. H. D. Rawnsley.

Line 603. *him*. John Gough of Kendal. This sketch is exceedingly accurate in all respects except that he was still alive when "The Excursion" was written.

Line 616. *That Sycamore*, etc.

"This Sycamore oft musical with Bees;  
Such Pents the Patriarchs loved."

S. T. COLERIDGE. W. W.

Line 637. *of Gold-rill side*. "A farm not far from the Knott house in Patterdale." — H. D. RAWNSLEY.

Line 706. *Dear Youth*. See Fenwick note. Line 758. *boastful Tyrant*. See "I Grieved for Buonaparté."

Line 963. *a gateway*. An allusion to the Knott houses, in Fenwick note to "The Excursion." "The house still stands under Place Fell, on the southeast side of the valley of Patterdale." — H. D. RAWNSLEY.

Line 980. *Perish the roses and the flowers of*



kings. The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's, Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," etc. W. W.

The reader of "The Excursion" is compelled to admit the old accusation against its author: that he often falls from the heights of poetic vision to the level of the trivial and apparently commonplace. Sir Henry Taylor said of his conversation, "He keeps tumbling out the highest and deepest thoughts that the mind of man can reach, in a stream of discourse which is so oddly broken by the little hitches and interruptions of common life that we admire and laugh at him by turns."

BOOK EIGHTH. The scene of this book is in the churchyard at Grasmere and at the Parsonage on Dummall Raise.

Line 89. *I have lived to mark*, etc. "Truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth." Fenwick note.

Line 101. *Or straggling burgh*, etc. Penrith, the Pen Hill of olden times, with its series of castles on the Esmond and Lowthor.

Line 111. *Earth has lent her waters*, etc. In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect with gratitude the pleasing picture which in his poem of the Fleece the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves. W. W.

Line 151. *With you I grieve*, etc. In his pamphlet "On the Convention of Cintra," which Canning called the most eloquent production since Burke, Wordsworth said: "While mechanic arts, manufactures, agriculture, commerce, and all the products of knowledge which are confined to gross, definite, and tangible objects have been putting on more brilliant colours, the splendour of the imagination has been failing."

Line 199. *yet do I exult*, etc. This reveals conclusively that Wordsworth's so-called hatred of Science has no foundation in fact. It was not Science he hated, but some of the results which came from a narrow conception of it. He says: "Poetry is the breath and fervid spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science."

Line 413. *Christ-cross-row*. The alphabet arranged in form of a cross in the old Horn-books.

In this book the poet rises to the height of his great argument of Nature and Man:—

"Wisdom sheathed  
In song love-humble; contemplations high,  
That built like larks their nest upon the ground;  
In sight and vision; sympathies profound  
That spanned the total of humanity."

AUBREY DE VERE.

The fundamental teaching of this book is to be found in all of the poet's work after 1800, when he threw off the spell of Godwinism and *The Wealth of Nations*, and returned to the sweetly human affections. Some called this a desertion, and their sentiments were embodied in Browning's "Lost Leader."

BOOK NINTH. The scene of the concluding book of "The Excursion" is at the Parsonage and on Loughrigg Fell, at the foot of Grasmere Lake.

Line 3. *An active Principle*, etc. See "The Prelude," ii. 389-418, and "Tintern Abbey," ll. 88-111.

It was this philosophy of Wordsworth that profoundly interested such minds as John Stuart Mill and George Eliot.

Line 59. *High peaks*. Fairfield and Helvellyn and Helm Crag.

Line 68. *full river*. The Rotha, which rises in Easdale, flows past the churchyard into Grasmere Lake.

"Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,  
O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
Sing him thy best! for few or none  
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone."

ARNOLD.

Line 81. *placed by age*, etc. See "Ode to Lycoris," and "Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."

Line 299. *Binding herself by statute*, etc. The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government. W. W.

Scotland passed her Education Act in 1872 and England in 1880. The present activity of England in regard to education as a means of protecting her against the industrial competition of Germany and the United States is significant testimony to the wisdom of Wordsworth; for it is in these two countries that national education in all grades has made the greatest strides.

Line 363. *With such foundations laid*, etc. This appeal to the soul of England reveals Wordsworth in the heights, seeing with the eyes and speaking with the voice of a prophet.

Line 422. *As if preparing for the peace of evening*. See sonnet, "Composed by the side of Grasmere Lake."

Lines 495-498. *yon rocky isle . . . that other*, etc. This description applies to Rydal Mere.

Line 570. *We clomb a green hill's side*. Loughrigg Fell, looking toward Grasmere.

Line 575. *Church-tower. St. Oswald's, Grasmere.*

Lines 590-608. *Already had the sun, etc. See "Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."*

Line 690. *Mysterious rites, etc. Memorials of Druidism are still to be seen in the Lakes. See "Monument commonly called Long Meg and her Daughters," p. 721.*

Line 774. *one cottage. The scene closes at Blea Tarn House, Little Langdale.*

In looking back over "The Excursion" we may say with Hazlitt: "It resembles that part of the country in which the scene is laid. It has the same vastness and magnificence, with the same nakedness and confusion. It has the same overwhelming oppressive power."

Sir Leslie Stephen, alluding to the influence of "The Excursion" on George Eliot, says: "It is a work, which, in spite of all critical condemnations, has properly impressed the spiritual development of many eminent persons."

## 1814

Page 525. *LAODAMIA.*

1814 marks an era in the poetical life of Wordsworth. In the preparation of his eldest son for the University, he was drawn more closely to the classic writers, especially Virgil, and this country-loving poet had new delights for him. The picture in the sixth *Æneid* suggested to him this loftiest and most pathetic of his poems.

The hero and heroine are taken from Homer and Ovid, and the poem is one of the finest and richest expressions of classic beauty and finish. It is in marked contrast to the severe ruggedness of "Michael," and the magical smoothness of "The Solitary Reaper," yet it is like them in the perfect harmony of theme and the expression.

Aubrey de Vere says: "After I had read 'Laodamia' [which was his introduction to Wordsworth], some strong calm hand seemed to have been laid on my head; a new world opened itself out. I was translated into another planet of song."

Line 169. *spiry trees, etc. For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus see the "Iphigenia in Aulis" of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers.*

"— His Laodamia,  
It comes. —"

W. W.

Page 527. *DION.*

Another product of this revival of interest in the classics was "Dion."

"This poem began with the following stanza, which has been displaced on account of its detaining the reader too long from the subject, and as rather precluding, than preparing for, the due effect of the allusion to the genius of Plato:—

"Fair is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing  
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,  
Bears him on while proudly sailing  
He leaves behind a moon-illumin'd wake:  
Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve  
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve;  
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings  
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs  
To which, on some unruffled morning, clings  
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows!  
— Behold! — as with a gushing impulse heaves  
That downy prow, and roflly cleaves  
The mirror of the crystal flood,  
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,  
And pendent rocks, where'er, in gliding state,  
Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate  
Or Rival, save the Queen of night  
Showering down a silver light,  
From heaven, upon her chosen Favourite!"

W. W.

Lamb wrote: "The story of Dion is divine—the genius of Plato falling on him like moonlight, the finest thing ever expressed."

Prof. Dowden thinks the date of this poem was more probably 1816.

Page 530. *COMPOSED AT CORA LINN.*

On the 18th of July, 1814, Wordsworth, in company with his wife and Sara Hutchinson, left Rydal for a tour in Scotland.

Line 6. *Tower.* This part of the Old Castle of Corra still stands.

Page 532. *YARROW VISITED.*

In his first visit to Scotland Wordsworth was fortunate in having made the acquaintance of Walter Scott; now he meets him whom Scott, while gathering the Border Minstrelsy, had discovered on the hills of Ettrick—James Hogg. Having spent the night at Traquair, on the following morning the Ettrick Shepherd met them and became their guide to the "bonny holms of Yarrow." They were now in the one spot of all that "singing country" toward which they had looked with the fondest anticipation. The spontaneous interrogation, mingled with surprise and perhaps disappointment, bursts forth, —

"And is this — Yarrow?"

There is no place in the Lowlands so rich in tender associations and natural beauty as the vale of Yarrow. It has been the subject of those nameless singers whose ballads were first caught and given to the world by Scott in his Border Minstrelsy. One who visits this scene should be familiar with such ballads as "The Douglas Tragedy," "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow," "Lament of the Border Widow," "The Song of Outlaw Murray," and "Auld Maitland," all of which belong to Yarrow and Ettrick. On an early morning in August, 1887, I went alone on my first visit to these vales. The sun was just beginning to scatter the clothing of mist and reveal the braes and bens with their graceful flowing outline, the clear streams winding through the fern and heather, the mouldering towers of Dryhope, where the Border chieftains came to woo the lovely Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow, and clear St. Mary's Loch visibly delighted with her exquisite setting of emerald

and purple. Then it was that I appreciated these lines, —

"Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
A softness still and holy," —

such was the pensive loveliness of the scene.

### 1815

Wordsworth published a new edition of his poems this year in two volumes. It was dedicated to Sir George Beaumont and contained his illustrations to "The White Doe of Rylstone," "Lucy Gray," "The Thorn," and "Peter Bell." With these poems the first great period in the creative work of the poet closes. From this time the vision and the faculty divine — so significant in conception and execution, in dignity and intensity of feeling, in sweetness, purity, and melody — passed away to return only at rare moments.

On receiving a gift copy of the edition from Wordsworth, Lamb wrote: "I am glad that you have not sacrificed a verse to those scoundrels [the critics]. I would not have had you offer up the poorest rag that lingered upon the stript shoulders of little Alice Fell, to have atoned all their malice. . . . I would rather be a doorkeeper in your margin, than have their text swelling with my eulogies."

Page 534. To B. R. HAYDON.

A more brilliant or a more pathetic career than that of Haydon is hardly to be found. Confessedly a genius of the highest order; with a love for his art which has never been surpassed; sublimely courageous in his devotion to what he considered to be his duty as a leader of "Historic Painting;" surrounded by the most steadfast friends and the most subtle enemies; now upon the highest wave of favor, now lodging in a debtor's jail, and at last driven to despair at being cheated of his deserts; repeating the wail —

"Stretch me no longer on this tough world," —  
he takes his own life.

What the sympathy of a man like Wordsworth meant to him is shown in his correspondence. On receiving this sonnet he wrote: "It is the highest honour that ever was paid or ever can be paid to me. You are the first English poet who has ever done complete justice to my delightful art."

The *Judgment of Solomon* and *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* showed conclusively that Haydon was the first historical painter that England had produced. The latter is now the property of the Catholic Cathedral in Cincinnati.

In the diary of Henry Crabb Robinson, June 11, 1820, is the following: "Breakfasted, with Monkhouse; Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth there. We talked of Haydon; Wordsworth wants to have a large sum raised to enable Haydon to continue in his profession."

Page 534. ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.

The allusions in this poem are from Milton's *History*, and not from "The Preface."

Lines 1, 2. In the "Epitaphium Damonis" Milton says (162 et seq.): —

"Of Brutus Dardan Chief my song shall be,  
How with his barks he plunged the British Sea."

In his Latin poem "Mansus," Milton sketched something of his plan for an epic based on the same legendary history of Britain.

Line 14. *giants*. Alluding to the legend of Geoffrey of Monmouth, which tells how, after expelling the giants from Albion, Brutus gave the name Britain to the land.

Line 17. *Corineus*. A Trojan chief who came with Brutus and to whom Cornwall was given.

Line 34. *Guendolen*. Loocrine, son of Brutus, married Guendolen of Cornwall, but loved Estreldis, a German princess, by whom he had a daughter. Guendolen raised an army in Cornwall, defeated Loocrine. See "Comus," ll. 824-830.

Line 11. Leir succeeded Loocrine in Cornwall. See Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

Line 71. *Artegall*. Archigallo. See Milton's *History*.

Line 97. *Troynvant*. Troia nova, later Troynvantium, now London.

Line 234. *Brother by a Brother saved*. Alluding to Milton's *History*.

Page 538. "THE FAIREST. BRIGHTEST. HUES OF ETHER FADE."

This and the following eight sonnets were originally published in the edition of 1815. The precise year of their composition is not known, but Prof. Knight says they fall between 1810 and 1815.

Page 540. "MARK THE CONCENTRED HAZELS."

The scene of this sonnet is the terrace at Under Lamerigg where the poet composed "The Prelude."

Page 541. "BROOK, WHOSE SOCIETY THE PORT SEEKS."

This brook is evidently the Rotha, or its tributary Easdale Beck, associated with Emma's dell. See note to "It was an April morning."

### 1816

Page 541. ODE — THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendour of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the

treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe: and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, they confide, who encourage a firm hope that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings; and to feed a morbid satisfaction, by aggravating these burthens in imagination; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price; and, acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatever be the temper of the public mind) through a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise. — But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power.

The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned, and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination; — by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded and its riches acquired; — by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect; — by adequate rewards and permanent honours conferred upon the deserving; — by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country; — and by especial care to provide and support institutions in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through this volume.  
W. W.

Line 22.

"Discipline the rule whereof is passion."

LORD BROOKE. W. W.

Compare this and the following tribute to Wellington with that of Tennyson in the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington."

Page 549. THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA.  
Alluding to that disastrous retreat of Napoleon from Moscow.

Page 550. "BY MOSCOW SELF-DEVOTED TO A BLAZE."  
Alluding to the burning of the city by order of the governor, to prevent it from falling into the hands of Napoleon.

Page 550. THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCHHEIM.

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day: "When the Austrians took Hoch-

heim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted — not a gun was fired — not a voice heard: they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzenberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water." W. W.

Page 551. SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY JOHN SOBIESKI.

Line 14. *He conquering*, etc. "See Filicaia's ode addressed to Sir John Sobieski, King of Poland. Sobieski relieved Vienna when it was besieged by the Turks, 1683." — KNIGHT.

Page 551. OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

Line 9. *Assailed*, etc.

"From all the world's encumbrance did himself assail." SPENSER. W. W.

Page 551. EMPERORS AND KINGS, ETC.

Line 8. After the battle of Waterloo.

Page 552. FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST.

"Alluding to the treachery of Napoleon in capturing and executing the Duc d'Enghien, grandson of the Prince of Condé, on suspicion of his complicity in a plot to overthrow him." — KNIGHT.

### 1817

Page 556. VERNAL ODE.

There is no poem of Wordsworth's which reveals loftier spiritual insight or nobler philosophic truth than this Orphic Ode, and the two poems which follow it. The transience of external things brings no sorrow to one who can exercise such faith.

Page 558. ODE TO LYCORIS.

While these poems are less direct in allusions to places, yet to one who has once felt the meaning and charm of Rydal they abound in sights and sounds peculiar to it.

"In the Fenwick note to 'To the Same,' 'the two that follow' are 'September 1819,' and its sequel 'Upon the Same Occasion.'" — KNIGHT.

Page 561. THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

If one is staying at Grasmere a pleasant tramp of two days may be made by crossing Helvellyn by Gridale Tarn to Patterdale, and returning by way of Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside. From Patterdale one passes Brother's Water, the scene of the "Daffodils," and near the summit of the Pass on the right the Kirk stones. The views on the route are of surpassing beauty. From the inn at Ambleside the scenery is in marked contrast to the ruggedness and desolation of the ascent.

Lines 41-48. Among the evidences of Roman occupation in these regions are the roads. Kirkstone Pass was one of the roads by which Agricola led his two columns into Westmoreland.

### 1818

Page 564. THE PILGRIM'S DREAM.

The allusions in this poem and ii. and iii. which follow are to the middle road over White Moss Common. See "The Primrose of the Rock," note.

Page 566. COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOUR AND BEAUTY.

After the production of the immortal Ode (1806) Wordsworth's inspiration did not again reach that lofty height, unless upon this occasion, a sunset among the Westmoreland hills, where earth and heaven are commingled with a natural magic and moral sublimity, which was his peculiar gift to English poetry.

The poet is looking toward Grasmere and the hills about and beyond it.

Line 49. *Wings at my shoulders seem to play*.

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of "Jacob's Dream," by Mr. Alstone, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends. W. W.

### 1819

Page 567. "PURE ELEMENT OF WATERS! WHEREFOREST'ER."

This and the two following were suggested by Mr. W. Westall's views of the Caves, etc., in Yorkshire. W. W.

In "The Prelude," vi. 194, Wordsworth says that making quest for scenes renowned for beauty, he and his sister "pried into Yorkshire dales."

Page 568. AERIAL ROCK.

Lines 7-9. See Fenwick note to "The River Duddon," p. 592.

Page 570. TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

This river of Wordsworth's youth rises in Borrowdale, near the Eagle's Crag. See "The Prelude," i. 270-288.

Page 570. "GRIEF, THOU HAST LOST AN EVER-READY FRIEND."

See *Ruskin and the English Lakes*, by Canon Rawnsley, chap. v.

Page 571. "I HEARD (ALAS! 'T WAS ONLY IN A DREAM)."

See the Phædon of Plato, by which this sonnet was suggested. W. W.

Page 571. THE HAUNTED TREE.

Some of the noblest forest trees in England stand in Rydal Park. The "Lady" was the poet's daughter, Dora.

## 1820

The larger part of the poems of this year rise out of two experiences in the life of the poet: the visit to the Continent, and reminiscences of his various visits to the Duddon valley. The most interesting commentaries on the first series are Dorothy's *Journal*, and *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence* of Henry Crabb Robinson, vol. i.

Page 573. "THERE IS A LITTLE UNPRETENDING RILL."

It is evident from the Fenwick note that the rill beside which the poet and his sister rested on their walk from Kendal to Grasmere in the spring of 1794 was Skel-Ghyll Beck, which one sees on the road from Bowness to Ambleside, just before reaching Low Wood. It rises from the Wansfell on the right, and passes behind Dove's Nest, the home of Mrs. Hemans, under the road to the lake. See H. D. Rawnsley, *The English Lakes*, vol. ii. chap. iv.

Page 574. ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM.

Under date of June 11, 1820, Henry Crabb Robinson writes: "Breakfasted with Monkhouse. Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth there. He has resolved to make some concession to the public taste in 'Peter Bell.' . . . I never saw him so ready to yield to the opinion of others."

Page 574. OXFORD, May 30, 1820.

Wordsworth, with his wife and sister, set out for London on their way to the Continent in the early summer and were at Oxford on May 30. This visit inspired two sonnets.

Page 575. JUNE 1820.

The Wordsworths arrived in London early in June to be present at the marriage of Mr. Monkhouse. They stayed with Christopher Wordsworth at the Rectory, Lambeth. It was during this time that the poet visited Richmond, where Thomson is buried.

Line 2. *Groves*. Wallachia. W. W.

Lines 12-14. See Thomson, "The Seasons," Spring.

Page 575. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT, 1820.

This Series was written between 1820 and 1822.

Under date of July 10, 1820, Dorothy writes in her *Journal*: "We—William, Mary and Dorothy Wordsworth—left the Rectory House, Lambeth, at a quarter to eight o'clock. Had the Union coach to ourselves till within two stages of Canterbury."

Page 576. FISH-WOMEN—ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

If in this sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take

shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking. W. W.

Page 576. BRUGES.

This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful city. Mr. Southey, in the "Poet's Pilgrimage," speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

"Time hath not winged her, nor hath ruin sought  
Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,  
Save in those recent days, with evil fraught,  
When mutability, in drunken joy  
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,  
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

"But for the scars in that unhappy rage  
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;  
Like our first Sires, a beautiful old age  
Is hers in venerable years arrayed;  
And yet, to her, benignant stars may bring,  
What fate denies to man, — a second spring

"When I may read of tilts in days of old,  
And tourneys graced by Chieftains of renown,  
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,  
If fancy would pourtray some stately town,  
Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,  
Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee."

In this city are many vestiges of the splendour of the Burgundian Dukedom, and the long black mantle universally worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connection, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Bruges is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. The hotel to which we drove at Ghent furnished an odd instance. In the passages were paintings and statues, after the antique of Hebe and Apollo; and in the garden a little pond, about a yard and a half in diameter, with a weeping willow bending over it, and under the shade of that tree, in the centre of the pond, a wooden painted statue of a Dutch or Flemish boor, looking ineffably tender upon his mistress, and embracing her. A living duck, tethered at the feet of the sculptured lovers, alternately tormented a miserable eel and itself with endeavours to escape from its bonds and prison. Had we chanced to espy the hostess of the hotel in this quaint rural retreat, the exhibition would have been complete. She was a true Flemish figure, in the dress of the days of Holbein; her symbol of office, a weighty bunch of keys, pendent from her portly waist. In Brussels the modern taste in costume, architecture, etc., has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle; but in Bruges old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goings-on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a pen-

sive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children. — *Extract from Journal.* W. W.

Page 576. AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

Dorothy tells us in her Journal, July 17, that their guide was one Lacoste, who was Napoleon's guide through the country previous to the battle. He was compelled to stay by Napoleon's side till the moment of flight. See Scott, "The Field of Waterloo," and Byron's Waterloo, Canto III., "Childe Harold," for contrasts to Wordsworth's contemplative style.

Page 577. AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

Line 14. *Where unrelenting frosts the rocky crescent bleach.* "Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms—let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that in the very middle of the wall, a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous Roland, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'BRECHE DE ROLAND.'" — *Raymond's Parnasses.* W. W.

Page 578. HYMN FOR THE BOATMEN.

Line 24. *Miserere Domine.* See the beautiful Song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, "The Remorse." Why is the harp of Quantock silent? W. W.

Page 578. THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE. Lines 1, 2.

*Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly  
Doth Danube spring to life!*

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a capacious stone Basin in front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it, — and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The copiousness of the spring at Doneschingen must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube. W. W.

Page 578. ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH, LAUTERBRUNNEN.

"The Staub-bach" is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had

ever heard; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall — and reminded me of religious services chanted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Mr. Southey has thus accurately characterised the peculiarity of this music: "While we were at the Waterfall, some half-score peasants, chiefly women and girls, assembled just out of reach of the Spring, and set up — surely, the wildest chorus that ever was heard by human ears, — a song not of articulate sounds, but in which the voice was used as a mere instrument of music, more flexible than any which art could produce, sweet, powerful, and thrilling beyond description." See Notes to *A Tale of Paraguay.* W. W.

Page 580. ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS.

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it. W. W.

Page 584. THE LAST SUPPER.

Lines 1, 2.

*Tho' searching damps and many an envious flaw  
Have marred this Work.*

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs. — I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Merghen, are both admirable; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached. W. W.

Page 581. THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

Line 40. *Of Figures human and divine.* The statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike the unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach.

— Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between! W. W.

Page 587. PROCESSIONS.

Lines 48, 49.

*Still, with those white-robed Shapes — a living Stream,*

*The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise.*

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin — but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery); it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving Figures* gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity. W. W.

Page 588. ELEGIAC STANZAS.

The "Friend" alluded to in the Fenwick note was Henry Crabb Robinson. He writes thus of meeting the strangers: "In the stage between Berne and Solothurn, which takes a circuit through an unpicturesque, flat country, were two very interesting young men. . . . The elder was an American, aged twenty-one, named Goddard." On August 16 Wordsworth writes of meeting the young men: "Mr. Robinson introduced two young men, his companions, an American and a Scotchman — genteel, modest youths."

In October, 1890, when I was collecting subscriptions for the preservation of Dove Cottage, Mrs. H. M. Wigglesworth, of Boston, Mass., a sister of the young man commemorated in this poem, sent me a check in memory of her brother. Alluding to his death she wrote: "Wordsworth showed a very kind interest, wrote a letter full of sympathy to my mother, and later sent the memorial lines beginning, 'Lulled by the sound of pastoral bells.' It will give me pleasure to add something to the sum you are collecting."

Line 3. *Queen.* Mount Righi. — Regina Montium. W. W.

Line 75. *This tribute*, etc. The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted mother felt, was derived from this tribute to her son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her daughter, who visited Europe some years afterward. W. W.

Page 590. ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE.

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, stand-

ing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards *were to float*. He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column — which was not completed at the time we were there. W. W.

Page 590. AFTER LANDING — THE VALLEY OF DOVER, November 1820.

Lines 6, 7.

*We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To raminate.*

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Everywhere one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will. W. W.

Page 591. DESULTORY STANZAS.

Line 57. *Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks.* At the head of the Vallais. LES FOURCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that inclose the Valais, which terminates at ST. MAURICE. W. W.

Lines 49-51. *ye that occupy*

*Your council-seats beneath the open sky,  
On Sarnen's Mount.*

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Unterwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose château formerly stood there. On the 1st of January 1308, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland. W. W.

Line 56. *Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge.* The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral-bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as *works of art*; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed. W. W.

Page 592. THE RIVER DUDDOX.

They returned from the Continent on Nov.



9, and went to Cambridge. During their visit to the Continent their brother Christopher had been promoted to be Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. From Cambridge they went into Coleorton, and returned to Rydal Mount Dec. 20.

"A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the 'Ruins of Rome':—

'The rising Sun  
Flames on the ruins in the purer air  
Towering aloft;'

and ends thus—

'The setting Sun displays  
His visible great round, between yon towers,  
As through two shady cliffs.'

"Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, 'Lewesdon Hill,' is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

'To-morrow for severer thought, but now  
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day.'

"No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that this series of Sonnets was the growth of many years;—the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled 'The Brook,' of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

"May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it?—There is a sympathy in streams, 'one calleth to another;' and I would gladly believe, that 'The Brook' will, ere long, murmur in concert with 'The Duddon.' But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has

been acknowledged from the earliest ages;—through the 'Flumina anem sylvasque inglorius' of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo 'Brook').

'The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,  
Till by himself' he learned to wander,  
Adown some trotting burn's meander,  
AND NA' THINK LANG.' W. W.

SONNETS I., II., III. — Next to "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," the Duddon sonnets demand of the student a careful study of the topographical allusions and the use of a discriminating imagination. During several seasons I have studied this region; and while I have made my notes quite independent of others, I have found them to agree in the main with those of Mr. Herbert Rix and Canon Rawnsley.

The birthplace of "a native Stream" is not easily identified, although it is on the north or Cumbrian side of Wrynose Fell. The explorer will find two possible sources, not far from the Three Shire Stones: one of these has a broad prospect of lake and mountain, while the other is in the middle of the "lofty waste" of Sonnet ii. The allusions in Sonnet iii. to the "tripping lambs" and the "brilliant moss"—Bog-moss which glistens like gold when the sun shines upon it—are strikingly Wordsworthian.

SONNET II. Line 11. *huge deer*. The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct. W. W.

SONNET IV. The descriptions in this sonnet apply to any one of the several "falls" which the stream makes from Wrynose Gap to the valley below. Canon Rawnsley thinks the point of view is from the main road leading to Cockley Beck.

SONNET V. When one passes from Wrynose Bottom to Cockley Beck and turns to the northeast, one will behold the "unfruitful solitudes." The cottage may have been one of several in this vicinity.

SONNET VI. The allusions here are to flowers which grow by the Duddon from April to August, from the speedwell to the eyebright, in great profusion.

Lines 9, 10. *There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness*, etc. These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Symphon. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile:

"Glancing from their plumes  
A changeful light the azure vault illumines.  
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn  
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,  
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed  
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread.

Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,  
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,  
And still the balance of his frame preserves,  
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,  
Sees at a glance, above him and below,  
Two rival heavens with equal splendour glow.  
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems;  
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;  
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,  
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland. W. W.

SONNET VIII. In passing from Cockley Beck to Birks Brig if one looks back to the north one will get a glimpse of the features of the valley revealed in this sonnet. Wordsworth calls the Duddon "blue Streamlet" from the aspect given it as it passes over the blue-gray slate stones.

SONNETS IX., X. These sonnets refer to the third of the four stepping-stones on the Duddon, those opposite Seathwaite, and under Walla-barrow Crag.

SONNETS XI., XII. In these sonnets we return to Birks Brig below the first Stepping-Stones. Canon Rawnsley thinks the scene is in the field below that of Sonnets ix., x., because there a sky-blue stone may be seen midstream.

SONNETS XIII., XIV. The scene of these sonnets is that from Pen Crag, which stands in the centre of the vale. The "hamlet" is Seathwaite; "barn and byre" are those of Newfield farmhouses, in Wordsworth's day an inn and farm combined; while the "spouting mill" is now a ruin to be seen near Seathwaite Chapel on the beck. Newfield is no longer an inn, but generous hospitality will be found there as I can testify. At the foot of this crag the Duddon plunges out of sight as if slumbering "the haunts of men."

SONNET XV. The "chasm" is that of xiv.; while the "niche," according to Canon Rawnsley, is that to be seen on the southern face of the Crag by one standing at Newfield Farm.

SONNET XVI. "The weathering of the volcanic ash of the Crag, and the cliff of Walla-barrow opposite would naturally have suggested this sonnet." — H. D. RAWNSLEY.

SONNETS XVII., XVIII. The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steep of Borrowdale, Wasdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal lake, and remained some hours near its banks; the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle. — There were

several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately. — The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons. — The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stoneside from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets (which together may be considered as a Poem) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. "The road leading from Conistown to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the River Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale, wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Backcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

"The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of foam which the rocky channel of a river can give to water." — *Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes*, vol. i. pp. 98-100.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Conistown over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown

over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the wayside. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unviolated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house exchanging "good-morrows" as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; then he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon is a view upwards into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of *THE PEN*; the one opposite is called *WALLA-BARROW CRAG*, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The chaotic aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished!*"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, "are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls" (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high)

"displayed in the short space of half a mile." That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. "The concussion," says Mr. Green, speaking of the event (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril), "was heard, not without alarm, by the neighbouring shepherds." But to return to Seathwaite Churchyard: it contains the following inscription:—

"In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age."

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel is this notice:—

"Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the 18th Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, etc. In the seventh book of the "Excursion," an abstract of his character is given, beginning,

"A Priest abides before whose life such doubts  
Fall to the ground; —"

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here. W. W.

The Chapel has been rebuilt and the Parsonage enlarged.

#### MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth, continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in that situation to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a "Gentleman" in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston, — the

other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, viz. five pounds *per annum*; but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:—

"To Mr. —

"CONISTON, July 26, 1754

"SIR— I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. (Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of greyt wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself." . . .

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given:—

"By his frugality and good management he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man

who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

FROM THE REV. ROBERT WALKER

"SIR— Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C—, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:— Zachens, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zachens, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of a tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.*, of which is paid in cash, viz. 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P., Esq., of P—, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3*l.* from the several inhabitants of I—, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of

life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge) I hope you will not think your favour to me out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself, Sir, your much obliged and most obedient humble servant,

"R. W., Curate of S—.

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me), thus expresses himself. "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:—

"My LORD—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair; if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE—Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient Son and Servant,

"ROBERT WALKER."

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday were served upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half a guinea may be left for "little Robert's pocket-money," who was then at school: intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, "may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly," and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," meaning his wife and himself, "are in our wonted

state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours; let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,  
ROBERT WALKER."

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity. From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details. — And to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, etc., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own

hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried for winter provision; the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. — By these various resources, this

venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessaries of life;" but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts, and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one, it might be thought, could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humble uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away;" — the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale — the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that as in the practice of their pastor there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing that upon these occasions selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed, also — while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto — that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation that they were called upon to do no

more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerous attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkitt's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures: not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic and somewhat curious. "There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and knelt down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife, to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a quaker; — whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncompromising disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in

that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock; <sup>1</sup> a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blamable need not be determined;—certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties. — It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict, in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "She was no less excellent than her husband; she was good to the poor; she was good to everything!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one granddaughter; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

"O 't is a burthen, Cromwell, 't is a burthen  
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the churchyard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale,—masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn—it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which "seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his rights than distract for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society—changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances; had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the *Christian Remembrancer*, October 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates, by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

"His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterised the whole family. No railings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion were permitted. Every child, however young, had its appointed engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself sitting amongst them and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations. . . .

"He sat up late, and rose early; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter's night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for there was no school-house. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home or make them run up the mountain side.

"It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his mother and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains, it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tranquil evenings, as it slid behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils



and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information. — Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

"Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of grey hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a hoary-headed clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker. . . . He allowed no dissenter or methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his care: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish. — Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

"Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. 'How clear the moon shines to-night!' He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave."

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker

taught school, I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat  
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great  
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,  
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.  
HENRY FOREST, Curate."

"Honour, the idol which the most adore,  
Receives no homage from my knee;  
Content in privacy I value more  
Than all uneasy dignity."

"Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being 25 years of age."

"His curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Y<sup>e</sup> said 9th of May, y<sup>e</sup> said Mr. Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

"Illec testor H. Forest."

In another place he records that the sycamore-trees were planted in the churchyard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part:

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu  
Diffingunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;  
Utendum est aetate, cito pede praeiterit aetas."  
W. W.

SONNET XIX. Seathwaite Chapel is on Tarn Beck, the "tributary stream" of this sonnet.

SONNET XX. Donnerdale, or Dunnerdale as it is now called, is the tract lying between the east bank of the Duddon from Ulpha bridge to the limits of Broughton. It is bounded on the north by fells which separate it from Seathwaite. There is a hamlet called Hall Donnerdale between Seathwaite and Ulpha. It is from the bridge below this hamlet that Mr. Rix thinks Wordsworth saw the plain.

SONNET XXI. Lines 1-3. See Fenwick note to this series of poems.

SONNET XXII. The scene of this tragedy may have been one of the pools between Seathwaite and "Traveller's Rest" inn. The tradition itself is unknown to the present inhabitants.

SONNETS XXIV.-XXVII. There are many spots from which these sonnets could have been written and the "House" (xxvii.) be in view. The castle, the seat of the Lords of Ulpha, is now a ruin.

SONNET XXIX. The subject of this sonnet is the hillside burial-place of the Friends, not far from the scene of Sonnet xxii. It is called the Sepulchre. Inside the inclosing wall can be

seen the stone seats used by the Friends, who would not worship under any roof but the heavens.

SONNET XXX. Just beyond the burial-place of the previous sonnet the poet turned to the left to seek the plain, while the river was lost in the woods.

SONNET XXXI. From the plain of Sonnet xxx. can be seen the kirk situated on a rock washed by the Duddon. The church has been restored, quite in the spirit of the days when the poet visited it.

SONNET XXXIV.

Line 14. *We feel that we are greater than we know.*

"And feel that I am happier than I know."

MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader. W. W.

Page 602. A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE.

The "note" alluded to in the Fenwick note is that to a Pastoral Character in "Ecclesiastical Sonnets."

Page 602. TO ENTERPRISE.

Line 114. *living hill.*

—"a while the living hill  
Heaved with convulsive throes, and all was still."  
DR. DARWIN. W. W.

## 1821-2

Page 604. ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

### PART I.

During the month of December 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season, — our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate

each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets; but the Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only — its difficulty. W. W.

Most of the Ecclesiastical Sonnets were composed in 1821, but there were some additions made at a later date. The date of composition of a few is conjectural. The fact that his brother Christopher had published an *Ecclesiastical Biography* may have influenced him to write these sonnets. One should read in this connection Aubrey de Vere's *Legends of Saxon Saints*.

The motto, after George Herbert, was added in 1827. See Herbert's *Church Porch*, ll. 5-6.

SONNET II. Line 6. *Did holy Paul*, etc. Stillingsfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this Sonnet refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter, in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries. W. W.

SONNET III. Line 1. *seamew — white*. This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the Deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen. W. W.

SONNET V. Line 2. *Snowdon's wilds*. See "The Prelude," xiv. 1-62. *Brigantian coves*. The Brigantes were the hill-men whom the Romans could not conquer.

Line 8. *Iona's coast*. See sonnets on Iona, 1833.

Line 10. *lays*. Taliesin was the Cymric bard who sang the deeds of his chief Urien in his struggle against the Angles.

SONNET VI. Line 11. *St. Alban was the first Christian martyr in Britain*.

Line 13. *That Hill, whose flowery platform*, etc.

This hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works: — "Varius herbarum floribus depictus imò usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repenti arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longè latèque deductum in modum æquoris natræ complanat, dignum videlicet eum pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur." W. W.

SONNET IX. Line 10. *forced farewell*. Roman forces in Britain were called home to protect

the imperial city against the barbarians. The Britons then became prey to Picts and Angles.

SONNET X. Line 1. *Aneurin*. The Cymric bard who chronicled the struggle between Britons and Teutons in Strathclyde in his poem "The Gododin."

Line 12. *Plinlimmon*. The Cymric bards, Urien, Taliesin, Lywarch Hew, and Merlin, came from Wales.

SONNET XI. Line 2. *hallelujahs*. The Britons sought aid of Germanus, and as he led his forces against Picts and Saxons he ordered them to shout Hallelujah three times, on hearing which the enemy fled.

Lines 1, 2.

*Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid  
Of hallelujahs.*

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus. — See Bede. W. W.

Lines 9, 10.

*By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of Earth.*

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent, obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wicliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale. W. W.

SONNET XII. The convent of Bangor was attacked by Ethelforth while the monks were praying for safety; then the monastery with all its memorials was destroyed.

"Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: "If they are praying against us," he exclaimed, "they are fighting against us;" and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Broemael wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice." — See Turner's valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons.

"Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

"The account Bede gives of this remarkable event suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices." W. W.

SONNET XIII. Alluding to the familiar story

of Gregory setting free the Angle youths exposed for sale at Rome.

SONNET XV. The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness: — "Longe statura, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pectenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu." W. W.

King Edwin was converted by Paulinus.

SONNET XVI. Line 1. "*Man's life is like a Sparrow*." See the original of this speech in Bede. — The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting — and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. "Who, exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, shall first desecrate the altars and the temples? I, answered the Chief Priest; for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness I worshipped? Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser (equum emisarium); which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad — he, however, halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its enclosures. The place is shown where those idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham, ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, polluit ac destruxit eas, *quas ipse sacraverat aras*." The last expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monk of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil. W. W.

SONNET XVII. Line 11. *such the inviting voice*, etc. The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism. W. W.

SONNET XIX. Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds: — "Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clerici aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere peregrinus inveniretur, accurrebant, et flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedicti, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoris diligenter auditum præbebant." Lib. iii. cap. 26. W. W.

SONNET XXIII. Bede lived at the monastery of Jarrow on the Tyne. See Aubrey de Vere, *Legends of Saxon Saints*, "Bede's Last May."

SONNET XXIV. See Charles Kingsley, *Roman and Teuton*, "The Monk as Civilizer."

Line 2. *The people work like congregated bees*. See, in Turner's History, vol. iii. p. 528,

the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence. W. W.

SONNET XXVI. See *Alfred the West Saxon King*, McFayden.

Line 10. *pain narrows not his cares*. Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies. W. W.

SONNET XXIX. Line 1. *Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!* The violent measures carried on under the influence of *Dunstan*, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions. — See *Turner*. W. W.

Line 3. *Rowers*. The Dances.

SONNET XXX. Alluding to the old ballad which Canute composed when being rowed by Ely where he heard the monks chanting.

"*Merle sangen die Munechen binen Ely.*"

SONNET XXXI. Line 1. *woman-hearted*. "He was of a gentle and pious nature: not clever, but meek and good." — M. J. GUEST.

SONNET XXXIII. Line 14. The decision of the Council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe. W. W.

SONNET XXXVI. This order came from Innocent III. because King John forbade Langton to land in England.

SONNET XXXVII. See Aubrey de Vere, *Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, and Tennyson, *Thomas à Becket*.

## PART II.

SONNET III. Line 1. "*Here Man more purely lives*," etc. "*Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, premiatur copiosius.*" — BERNARD. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses." W. W.

SONNET VI. Line 4. St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

SONNET XI. Line 9. *Valdo*. Peter Waldo, a rich merchant, who founded the order of poor men of Lyons.

SONNET XIV. Among those martyrs of whom Milton sings in his Sonnet on the Late Massacre in Piedmont were followers of Waldo.

Line 8. *Whom Obloquy pursues*, etc. The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious; — and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarians, or Paturians, from *pati*, to suffer.

"Dwellers with wolves, she names them, for the pine And green oak are their covert; as the gloom Of night oft toils their enemy's design, She calls them Riders on the flying broom Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become One and the same through practices malign."

W. W.

SONNET XV. This alludes to the influence of Archbishop Chichele on Henry V. to make war in France, which ended at Agincourt.

SONNET XVI. See note to "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle."

SONNET XXI. Lines 7, 8. *And the green lizard*, etc. These two lines are adopted from a MS., written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source, as is the verse, "Where Venus sits," etc., and the line, "Once ye were holy, ye are holy still," in a subsequent Sonnet. W. W.

Line 10. *Waltham*. On the Lea, in Essex.

Line 14. Glastonbury, built by Joseph of Arimathea as the legend goes.

SONNET XXXI. Line 1. Quoted from Wordsworth's "Selections from Chaucer Modernized," stanza ix. of "The Prioress's Tale."

Line 9. Edward became king at the age of ten. He founded the famous Charity School, Christ's Hospital in London, and many other schools in England.

SONNET XXXII. Influenced by Cranmer Edward signed the warrant for her execution.

SONNET XXXIII. Edward reigned only six years, and at his death the Roman Catholic worship was restored.

SONNET XXXIV. Latimer and Ridley were burned together at Oxford in front of Balliol College — where now stands the Martyr's Memorial.

Line 4. *One (like those prophets)*, etc. "M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to looke unto was very simple: and being stripped into his shrowd, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes hee appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. . . . Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out.' — *Fox's Acts*, etc.

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, for an example in an humble Welsh fisherman. W. W.

SONNET XXXV. Cranmer's statue is included in the Memorial at Oxford.

SONNET XXXVII. Under Mary hundreds of the clergy sought refuge on the Continent. They returned on the ascension of Elizabeth.

Line 9. *speculative notions*. "Alluding to the discussion aroused by Knox's suggestion of modification of the Prayer Book, for which he left Frankfort and went to Geneva." — KNIGHT.

SONNET XXXVIII. Line 7. *alien storms*. Foreign intrigues against the Queen and those of Mary Queen of Scots.

Line 12. *foul constraint*. This may refer to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

SONNET XXXIX. Line 5. *The gift exalting*, etc. "On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'" — See *Walton's Life of Richard Hooker*. W. W.

SONNET XLI. Line 2. *sects*. Nonconformists.

Line 10. *craftily incites*, etc. A common device in religious and political conflicts.—See *Strype in support of this instance*. W. W.

Line 13. *new-born Church*. The Church reformed of the previous sonnet, which Wordsworth originally wrote New-born Church.

SONNET XLIII. Line 1. *Virgin Mountain*. The Jung-frau.

SONNET XLV. In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—"Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external publick worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the

*true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigour.*" W. W.

### PART III.

SONNET III. A vivid picture of the Restoration.

Line 12. "Duke of York received into the Church of Rome,"—KNIGHT.

SONNET IV. Lines 6, 7.

"Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,

To what can I be useful? Wherein serve

My nation, and the work from Heaven inspired?" MILTON.

SONNET VI. Results of the Act of Uniformity.

SONNET VII. Lines 1-3. See Milton, "On the Late Massacre in Piedmont."

SONNET VIII. The indignation of the people forced the authorities to set free the Bishops who refused to be party to James II.'s Declaration of Indulgences.

SONNET IX. Line 13. King James II.

SONNET XI. Alluding to Sacheverell's preaching in regard to the Act of Toleration which made him a popular hero.

SONNET XIII. American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends, Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous works, and a "Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey." W. W.

SONNET XV. The earliest Episcopal Bishops in America were Dr. Scabury of Connecticut, and Dr. White of Pennsylvania.

SONNET XVII. Line 1. *A genial hearth*, etc. Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important the examples of civility and refinement which the clergy stationed at intervals afford to the whole people. The established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery, often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence

must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegancies of life with the outward signs of piety and morality. With pleasure I recall to mind a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued Friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn, or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss-grown, sinking into and gently inclining towards the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the sonnet entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 602. W. W.

SONNET XXXII. This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the "Rush-bearing." W. W.

It is now observed at Grasmere as a Children's Festival. See Canon Rawnsley, *Life and Nature at the English Lakes*. "Rushbearing."

SONNET XXXV. Line 10. *Teaching us to forget them or forgive.* This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's history of Cambridge. W. W.

SONNET XXXVII. Lines 2-5. — *had we, like them, endured, etc.* See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the "Protestant wind." W. W.

SONNET XXXIX. This and the following refer to the church to be erected by Sir George Beaumont at Coleorton.

SONNET XL. Line 9. *Yet will we not conceal, etc.* The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same. W. W.

SONNETS XLIII.-XLV. Unless one has passed some time in the presence of England's noble castles and inspiring cathedrals, one is apt to wonder at the place they occupy in the literature and the life of her people. Wordsworth, in reverencing King's College Chapel, — the noblest and most inspiring structure ever erected for collegiate worship, — has yielded to the spell of this human past. The history of this magnificent chapel, the last of the thoroughly medi-

æval structures erected at Cambridge, is exceedingly interesting.

SONNET XLVI. Line 5. *Or like the Alpine Mount, etc.* Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit — a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition. W. W.

This series of Sonnets, while containing many poems of the first quality, is of less distinction than any other owing partly to the fact, as Wordsworth himself pointed out, "that there is unavoidably in all History, — except as it is a mere suggestion, — something that enslaves the fancy."

## 1823

Page 635. MEMORY.

For the origin of this poem see Fenwick note to lines "Written in a Blank Leaf of Macpherson's Ossian," p. 715.

Page 636. TO THE LADY FLEMING.

Line 12. Sir Michael Fleming came over with William of Normandy, and was given estates in Cumberland.

Line 15. Bekangs Ghyll — or dell of Nightshade — in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness. W. W.

Page 637. ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Lines 4, 5. Grasmere Church, dedicated to St. Oswald.

## 1824

Page 639. To —

"Addressed probably to Wordsworth's daughter Dora." — DOWDEN.

Page 640. TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS F.

"Lady Eleanor Butler and the Hon. Miss Ponsonby." — KNIGHT.

Page 640. COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE.

"Wordsworth visited Carnarvon Castle in September, 1824." — DOWDEN.

Page 642. EPITAPH IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORELAND.

This may be seen in the churchyard at Chapel (High) Stile, Great Langdale.

## 1825

Page 646. "THE MASSY WAYS, CARRIED ACROSS THESE HEIGHTS."

Evidences of Roman occupation are to be found at Ambleside, Grasmere, and other places in the Lakes. The "Far-terrace" of Rydal is as sacred as the garden at Dove Cottage.

Page 646. THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

Line 46. *more high, the Dacian force, etc.* Here and infra, see Forsyth. W. W.

The column was set up by the Senate and people in commemoration of the conquest of

Dacia by Trajan. It was 132 feet high and surmounted by a colossal statue of the Emperor; it stood in the centre of the Forum Trajanum. The sculptures which covered it picture the Dacian wars. See Merivale's *Romans under the Emperors*.

Lines 55-60. See "Character of the Happy Warrior."

Page 647. FAREWELL LINES.

Lamb wrote Wordsworth in 1822: "I grow ominously tired of official confinement. Thirty years have I served the Philistines, and my neck is not subdued to the yoke." In March, 1825, he received his pension and the next year he settled at Enfield, where he wrote to Wordsworth: "How I look down on the slaves and drudges of the world! Its inhabitants are a vast cotton-web of spin-spin-spinners! O the carking cares! O the money-grabblers! Sempiternal muck-worms."

1827

This year was saddened by the death of his friend, Sir George Beaumont. See "Elegiac Musings," 1830, note.

Page 648. ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE FORM OF A HARP.

Addressed to Edith May Southey. See "The Triad."

Page 648. To —

Possibly addressed to his sister Dorothy. Prof. Dowden says: "'To —,' I believe, means 'to Mary.'"

Line 14. Countess of Winchelsea. W. W.

Page 649. To S. H.

Sara Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister.

Page 650. "SCORN NOT THE SONNET."

It is not often that criticism is presented to us in the form of the highest poetry and condensed into fourteen lines. This sonnet alone is sufficient to vindicate Wordsworth's claim to mastery in this form of poetry; for in it we have history enriched with the finest touches of the imagination, and transmitted in diction pure and strong, while the music varies from the most powerful animation to the softest cadences of metrical harmony.

Page 651. RECOLLECTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF KING HENRY EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE, CAMBRIDGE.

The statue stands over King's Gateway to the Great Court of Trinity College.

Page 651. "WHILE ANNA'S PEERS AND EARLY PLAYMATES TREAD."

See "Liberty," line 2.

Page 652. TO RUTHA Q.—

Line 9. See Matthew Arnold, "Memorial Verses."

"Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,  
O Rutha, with thy living wave!  
Sing him thy best! for few or none  
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone."

Page 653. IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL.

This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living creature. But a Redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it — this I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the Redbreast, page 768. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the Invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away. W. W.

Line 1. *Redbreast*. The MS. title of the poem was "To a Redbreast." *Jemima*, the daughter of Edward Quillinan. See "Lines on a Portrait."

Page 653. CONCLUSION. To —

This may be addressed either to his sister Dorothy or to his daughter Dora.

Line 3. *public life*. See Sonnets on Independence and Liberty, edited by Stopford Brooke.

1828

Page 654. THE TRIAD.

Line 36. *Lucida*! Edith Southey.

Line 40. *youngest*, etc. Dora Wordsworth.

"There is truth in the sketch of Dora," says Sara Coleridge, "poetic truth, though such as none but a poet-father would have seen."

Line 174. *eldest born*. Sara Coleridge.

Page 658. THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED.

"In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate."

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested. W. W.

A gate still stands in the old place, and from the inscriptions cut upon it one would judge that "Hope" still rules there.

"Beside the wishing gate which so they name,  
Mid northern hills to me this fancy came:  
A wish I formed, my wish I thus expressed:  
*Would I could wish my wishes all to rest.*  
*And know to wish the wish that were the best.*"

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

Page 660. ON THE POWER OF SOUND.

The student of Wordsworth is everywhere impressed with his exquisite sensitiveness to sights and sounds. The eye and the ear are the royal avenues through which the world of matter reaches the world of mind.

1829

The most important event of this year was Wordsworth's visit to Sir William Hamilton in Ireland. Miss Eliza M. Hamilton (Sir William's sister), who assisted in entertaining Wordsworth, wrote of him: "I think it would be quite impossible for any one who had once been in Wordsworth's company ever again to think anything he has written silly."

Page 664. LIBERTY.

Line 2. *Anna*. See "While Anna's peers," etc., p. 651.

Line 8. *living Well*. In "Dora's Field," Rydal.

Lines 103, 104. *Sabine farm . . . Blandusia's spring*. See Horace's Odes, "Beatus Ille," and "O Fons Bandusiae."

Line 110. *Shall with a thankful tear*, etc. There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above Epistle concludes, being realised: nor were the verses ever seen by the Individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast; and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of life to which she had been called. The opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality, viz. quickness in the motions of her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's acquaintance, no equal. W. W.

Page 666. HUMANITY.

Line 32. *Descending to the worm in charity*. I am indebted, here, to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works. W. W.

Page 669. A GRAVESTONE UPON THE FLOOR IN THE CLOISTERS OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL.

This stone was still to be seen in the cloisters in 1899.

1830

Page 669. THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE.

See, in Percy's *Reliques*, that fine old ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love;" from which Poem the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is adopted. W. W.

Page 672. THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE.

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged Wife of Peter the Great. W. W.

Page 682. "IN THESE FAIR VALES HATH MANY A TREE."

Inscription intended for the stone in the grounds at Rydal Mount. The inscription still remains upon the stone.

Page 683. ELEGIAC MUSINGS.

Lady Beaumont died in 1829. Wordsworth visited Coleridge in November, 1830. On leaving Coleridge, he went to Cambridge, and on his way thither composed this poem. From Cambridge he wrote Sir William Rowan Hamilton, saying: "Thirty-seven miles did I ride in one day through the worst of storms; and what was my recourse? Writing verses to the memory of my departed friend, Sir George Beaumont."

1831

Page 684. THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

"We walked in the evening to Rydal. Coleridge and I lingered behind. We all stood to look at the Glow-worm Rock—a primrose that grew there, and just looked out on the road from its own sheltered bower."—DOROTHY WORDSWORTH, 1802.

The rock still remains.

Page 685. YARROW REVISITED.

There seems to be a deep significance in the fact that this time the two poets did not linger on the braes and bens, but about the mouldering ruin of Newark; we can see in it the effect of the thought that this was probably the last meeting of the two. The fear that Scott would not be able to revive his strength, even upon "Warm Vesuvius's vine-clad slopes," oppresses Wordsworth and colors the whole poem. These forebodings proved too true. This was not only their last meeting, but it was Scott's last visit to the Vale of Yarrow and the scenes he loved so dearly.

"On the 22d," says Mr. Lockhart, "these two great poets, who had through life loved each other and appreciated each other's genius more than infirm spirits ever did either of them, spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. Hence the last of the three poems by which Wordsworth has connected his name to all time with the most romantic of Scottish streams."

Page 687. ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES.

There is no finer tribute of one great poet to another than is found in this poem.



## Page 689. THE TROSACHS.

This poem has often been cited as the triumph of the pure style.

## Page 692. HIGHLAND HUT.

This sonnet describes the *exterior* of a Highland hut, as often seen under a morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, in this volume, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the *interior* of one of these rude habitations.

"On our return from the Trosachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I had sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

"A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of the clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whisky bottle for his refreshment, at our request. 'She keeps a dram,' as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the wayside, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk; and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, 'Ye'll get that,' bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; and above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been crusted over and varnished by many winters, till, where the firelight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten

our supper we sat about half an hour, and I think I never felt so deeply the blessing of a hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The man of the house repeated from time to time that we should often tell of this night when we got to our homes, and interposed praises of his own lake, which he had more than once, when we were returning in the boat, ventured to say was 'bonnier than Loch Lomond.' Our companion from the Trosachs, who, it appeared, was an Edinburgh drawing-master going, during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to John O'Groat's House, was to sleep in the barn with my fellow-travellers, where the man said he had plenty of dry hay. I do not believe that the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry, but this year it had a better chance than usual: wet or dry, however, the next morning they said they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to 'go ben,' attended me with a candle, and assured me that the bed was dry, though not 'sic as I had been used to.' It was of chaff; there were two others in the room, a cupboard and two chests, upon one of which stood milk in wooden vessels covered over. The walls of the house were of stone unplastered; it consisted of three apartments, the cow-house at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spence at the other end; the rooms were divided, not up to the rigging, but only to the beginning of the roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us, and they had a bright fire, which I could not see, but the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the under-boughs of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of shade above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means or other; and yet the colours were more like those of melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their bed at the other end of the room; I did not sleep much, but passed a comfortable night; for my bed, though hard, was warm and clean: the unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves beat against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and, when I sat up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less occupied by remembrance of the Trosachs, beautiful as they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head; I thought of the Faery-land of Spenser, and what I had read in romance at other times; and then what a feast it would be for a London Pantomime-maker could he but transplant it to

Drury-lane, with all its beautiful colours!" —  
MS. W. W.

Page 692. BOTHWELL CASTLE.

Line 4. *Once on those steepes I roamed.* The following is from the same MS., and gives an account of the visit to Bothwell Castle here alluded to: —

"It was exceedingly delightful to enter thus unexpectedly upon such a beautiful region. The castle stands nobly, overlooking the Clyde. When we came up to it, I was hurt to see that flower-borders had taken place of the natural overgrowings of the ruin, the scattered stones, and wild plants. It is a large and grand pile of red freestone, harmonising perfectly with the rocks of the river, from which, no doubt, it has been hewn. When I was a little accustomed to the unnaturalness of a modern garden, I could not help admiring the excessive beauty and luxuriance of some of the plants, particularly the purple-flowered clematis, and a broad-leaved creeping plant without flowers, which scrambled up the castle wall, along with the ivy, and spread its vine-like branches so lavishly that it seemed to be in its natural situation, and one could not help thinking that, though not self-planted among the ruins of this country, it must somewhere have its native abode in such places. If Bothwell Castle had not been close to the Douglas mansion, we should have been disgusted with the possessor's miserable conception of *adorn*ing such a venerable ruin; but it is so very near to the house, that of necessity the pleasure-grounds must have extended beyond it, and perhaps the neatness of a shaven lawn, and the complete desolation natural to a ruin, might have made an unpleasant contrast; and, besides being within the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, and so very near to the dwelling of a noble family, it has forfeited, in some degree, its independent majesty, and becomes a tributary to the mansion: its solitude being interrupted, it has no longer the command over the mind in sending it back into past times, or excluding the ordinary feelings which we bear about us in daily life. We had then only to regret that the castle and the house were so near to each other; and it was impossible *not* to regret it; for the ruin presides in state over the river, far from city or town, as if it might have a peculiar privilege to preserve its memorials of past ages, and maintain its own character for centuries to come. We sat upon a bench under the high trees, and had beautiful views of the different reaches of the river, above and below. On the opposite bank, which is finely wooded with elms and other trees, are the remains of a priory built upon a rock; and rock and ruin are so blended, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. Nothing can be more beautiful than the little remnant of this holy place; elm-trees (for we were near enough to distinguish them by their branches) grow out of the walls, and overshadow a small, but very elegant window. It can scarcely be conceived what a grace the castle

and priory impart to each other; and the river Clyde flows on, smooth and unruffled, below, seeming to my thoughts more in harmony with the sober and stately images of former times, than if it had roared over a rocky channel, forcing its sound upon the ear. It blended gently with the warbling of the smaller birds, and the chattering of the larger ones that had made their nests in the ruins. In this fortress the chief of the English nobility were confined after the battle of Bannockburn. If a man is to be a prisoner, he scarcely could have a more pleasant place to solace his captivity; but I thought that, for close confinement, I should prefer the banks of a lake, or the seaside. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings; you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy, sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves. These rude warriors cared little, perhaps, about either; and yet, if one may judge from the writings of Chaucer and from the old romances, more interesting passions were connected with natural objects in the days of chivalry than now; though going in search of scenery, as it is called, had not then been thought of. I had previously heard nothing of Bothwell Castle, at least nothing that I remembered; therefore, perhaps, my pleasure was greater, compared with what I received elsewhere, than others might feel." —  
MS. Journal.

Page 694. HART'S-HORN TREE.

"In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Baliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham, and Pendragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whinfell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag leaped over the pales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, fell, and died on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them: —

'Hercules killed Hart a greese,  
And Hart a greese killed Hercules.'

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree. The horns in process of time were almost grown over by the growth of the tree, and another pair was put up in their place." —  
NICHOLSON and BURNS'S *History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*.

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the highroad leading from Penrith to Appleby. This whole neighbourhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity, viz. Julian's Bower; Brougham and Penrith Castles; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith

Churchyard; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, etc. W. W.

Page 694. COUNTESS'S PILLAR.  
This still stands.

Page 695. ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.  
Hodgson's *History of Northumberland* says that one of Agricola's two legions came to Ambleside and there divided; one division going by Grasmere and the Raie to Carlisle, while the other went over Kirkstone to Penrith.

### 1832

Page 696. DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.  
This poem gives conclusive evidence that in old age Wordsworth still preserved his young love for Nature, and his magical interpretive power. The keenness of insight, the lyric rapture, the soothing effect of this work written at the age of sixty-two, indicate that the prayer he uttered for another had been answered for him, and an old age serene and bright had been granted.

Page 698. TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING HIS PICTURE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE ON THE ISLAND OF ST. HELENA.

The picture is described in vol. ii. p. 301 of the *Life of Benjamin Robert Haydon*.

Page 700. "IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY LIGHT," ETC.

This poem should preface every edition of the poet's works as it did that of 1845, at his request. See "Letter to Lady Beaumont."

Page 700. TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.

The portrait here alluded to was painted by H. W. Pickersgill, R. A., at the request of the Master and Fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge. The picture hangs in the dining hall at St. John's. It was completed in 1832.

### 1833

Page 700. A WREN'S NEST.

All the conditions revealed in this poem are still to be found at Rydal.

Page 707. TO THE RIVER GRETA.

Line 5. *But if thou (like Cocytus, etc.* Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that "the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A." Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, "*to greet*;" signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping; a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta,

though it does not, among the country people, take up that name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and thence flowing through Thirlmere. The beautiful features of that lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

"The scenery upon this river," says Mr Southey in his *Colloquies*, "where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most rememberable kind:—

— ambiguo lapsu refluente fluitque,  
Occurresque sibi venturas aspiciendas." W. W.

Page 707. IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH.

Line 1. The poet's father was buried in the churchyard of St. Michael's at Cockermouth.

Line 2. Catherine and Thomas, the poet's children, are buried in the Poet's Corner, Grasmere Churchyard.

Page 707. ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

Cockermouth Castle stands on an eminence not far from the manor-house in which Wordsworth was born. It is easy to imagine the influence of such a ruin upon his susceptible nature in childhood. See "The Prelude," i. 289-300.

Page 708. NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM.

Line 11. *By hooded Votaresses, etc.* Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen. W. W.

Page 708. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT.

"The fears and impatience of Mary were so great," says Robertson, "that she got into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle." The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of respect to her memory, as she had left it; and one cannot but regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction. W. W.

Page 709. STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A STEAM-BOAT OFF SAINT BEES' HEADS.

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of

Baruth, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the N.E. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

"St. Bees," say Nicholson and Burns, "had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her.

"The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M. A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees' College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has been repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College, and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighbourhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns. W. W.

Line 73. *Are not, in sooth, their Requiem's sacred ties.* I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon

sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results; and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies, recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, so was it blameless, and even praiseworthy; some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalising sublime instincts, and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the ambition and rapacity of the priesthood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy: *they* were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed, than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages or of the present time. W. W.

Line 162. *teaching of St. Bees.* See "The Excursion," seventh part, and "Ecclesiastical Sonnets," second part, near the beginning. W. W.

Page 712. ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN.

Line 1. *Cohorn.* A Dutch military engineer. Line 8. The Tower of Refuge, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved. W. W.

Line 14. *Hillary.* Under date of July 3, 1828, on the Isle of Man Dorothy writes: "Sir Wm. Hilary saved a boy's life to-day in the harbour. He raised a regiment for Government, and chose his own reward — a Baronetcy."

Page 712. ISLE OF MAN.

Of course the Fenwick note "William" should be John.

Page 713. ISLE OF MAN.

Line 8. *veteran Mariner.* Henry Hutchinson, the poet's brother-in-law. See Fenwick note to the following sonnet.

Page 713. BY A RETIRED MARINER.

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here. W. W.

Page 713. AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN.

Line 3. *Rushen Abbey.* W. W.

Page 713. TYNWALD HILL.

Line 9. *Off with yon cloud, old Snafell!*

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. "I found myself," says he, "on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years." It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance! W. W.

#### Page 715. ON REVISITING D'UNOLLY CASTLE.

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place. W. W.

#### Page 716. CAVE OF STAFFA.

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steamboat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind. W. W.

#### Page 717. FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE.

Line 1. *Hope smiled when your nativity was cast*, etc. Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces. W. W.

#### Page 717. IONA.

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do. W. W.

#### Page 719. THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND.

Line 5. *Yet fetched from Paradise*. It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Morebby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word *Deau*, a valley? Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in

the name Eimont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Ea—eau, French—aqua, Latin. W. W.

#### Page 720. NUNNERY.

Line 2. *the Pennine Alps*. The chain of Crossfell. W. W.

Line 14. *Canal*, etc. At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine at a very short distance from the main stream. W. W.

#### Page 721. STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS.

See "The Lake District Defence Society," by Canon Rawnsley, in *Transactions of the Wordsworth Society*.

#### Page 721. THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE RIVER EDEN.

Line 1. *A weight of awe, not easy to be borne*. The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came on it by surprise, I might overrate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say, I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance. W. W.

#### Page 721. LOWTHER.

Lowther Castle is about five miles from Pooley bridge, Ullswater. Lord Lonsdale was a patron of the poets, and the Castle was a frequent meeting-place of Wordsworth and his friends.

#### Page 721. TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future. W. W.

#### Page 722. THE SOMNAMBULIST.

Line 1. *Lyulph's Tower*. A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. W. W. These ruins are reached from Grasmere by the Gridale path over Helvellyn. See "Airey-Force Valley."

Line 3. *force*. A word used in the Lake District for Waterfall. W. W.

## 1834

Page 725. "NOT IN THE LUCID INTERVALS OF LIFE."

It is interesting to note that when the *Edinburgh Review* was attacking Byron, Wordsworth wrote: "The young man will do something if he goes on as he has begun. But these reviews, just because he is a lord, set upon him." Although Byron in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" alluded to Wordsworth as —

"That mild apostate from poetic rule,"

yet later in life after meeting Wordsworth at a dinner on being asked how he was impressed, he replied: "Why, to tell the truth, I had but one feeling from the beginning of the visit to the end, and that was *reverence*."

Page 727. THE REDIRFAST.

Line 45. *Matthew, Mark*, etc. These words are a part of a child's prayer, still in general use throughout the northern counties. W. W.

Page 728. LINES SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF F. STONE.

The "J. Q." of the Fenwick note was Miss Jennina Quillinan, the daughter of Mr. Edward Quillinan. See "In the Wood, of Rydal."

## 1835

Page 734. WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB.

Lines 1, 2. Lamb died on the 27th of December, 1834, and was buried in a lot selected by himself in Edmonston Churchyard. See note to "Farewell Lines."

Line 23. *From the most gentle creature nursed in fields*. This way of indicating the name of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending —

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!"  
W. W.

Line 50. *Thou wert a scorner*, etc. Lamb was a "scorner of the fields" until he visited the Lakes. To the first invitation hither he replied: "Sweets, sweets, markets, theatres, churches, Covent Gardens, shops sparkling with pretty faces of industrious milliners. . . . O city, for this may Keswick and her giant brood go hang."

When the Lakes had wrought their spell upon him, he wrote: "We thought we had got

into fairyland. . . Skiddaw, oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it. . . . It was a day that will stand out like a mountain, I am sure, in my life. I was very little. I had been dreaming I was great."

Line 86. *Her love*, etc. See Landor, "To the Sister of Elia."

Page 736. EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG.

Lines 1-4. See "Yarrow Visited," note.

Line 23. *How fast*, etc. Walter Scott died Sept. 21, 1832; S. T. Coleridge died July 25, 1834; Charles Lamb died Dec. 27, 1834; George Crabbe died Feb. 3, 1834; Felicia Hemans died May 16, 1835.

## 1836

Page 741. NOVEMBER 1836.

Sara Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister, who had been so much both to Wordsworth and Coleridge, died at Rydal in June, 1836, and was buried in Grasmere Churchyard. Such places as "Sara and Mary Craggs," near John's Grove, "Rock of Names," and Sara's Seat by Thirlmere, perpetuated her name in the Lakes.

Page 741. "SIX MONTHS TO SIX YEARS ADDED HE REMAINED."

Alluding to the poet's son Thomas, who died December, 1812.

## 1837

Page 741. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

It is impossible to fix accurately the date of every sonnet in this series. Prof. Dowden says they comprise the time between 1837 and 1842.

Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary, 1837, will be found an interesting commentary of this tour. In writing to Wordsworth of this tour in prospective Robinson said. "I am pleased when I am called on to spend at the suggestion of others."

Page 742. MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE.

Line 57. "*The Wizard of the North*." Under date of June 12 Robinson writes: "As long as the light lasted I read Lockhart's *Life of Scott* which Tickenor had lent me."

Line 76. *He said, "When I am there"*, etc. These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited" by Sir Walter Scott when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy; and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janiculum Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither. W. W.

Line 98. *The whole world's Darling*. While writing this of Scott, Wordsworth was much pleased that an edition of his own works was being prepared in America by Prof. Henry Reed, of Philadelphia. See "On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford."

Line 159. *Mount Calvary*. Alluding to the fact that earth had been brought here from Mount Calvary to form a burial-ground.

Lines 233-236. *Savona . . . Chiabrera.*  
 "Wordsworth took a great fancy to the place and thought it a fit residence for such a poet."  
 — H. C. ROBINSON.

Line 241. *his sepulchral verse.* If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them on pages 388-391. W. W.

Line 264. *Bay.* Bay of Naples.

Line 306. *vault.* Alluding to the legend that St. Peter was imprisoned here, and caused a spring to flow in order that he might baptize his keeper.

Line 372. *to-morrow greet.* "We entered Rome in good spirits." — H. C. ROBINSON.

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church; — a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity. W. W.

It is well to remember in connection with the spirit of this note that Wordsworth at this time was intimate with the young poet and preacher F. W. Faber, who had come to Ambleside as curate, and tutor to the sons of Mrs. Benson Harrison, one of the Rydal Dorothy's. (See H. D. Rawnsley, "The Last of the Rydal Dorothy's" in a *Rambler's Note Book*.) The influence of Wordsworth upon Faber was very marked, as is to be seen in his poems written at the Lakes. An interesting memorial of this friendship is to be seen in the Bible of Wordsworth's old age, presented to him in 1842 by Faber. It is now in possession of Hon. George F. Hoar, Worcester, Mass., who has kindly sent me the following inscription which it bears: —

William Wordsworth  
 From Frederick Wm. Faber

*In affectionate acknowledgment of his kindnesses,  
 and of the pleasure and advantage of his friendship  
 Ambleside. New Year's Eve, 1842 A. D.*

*Be steadfast in the Covenant, and be conversant  
 therein, and wax old in thy work.*

*Ecclesiasticus, xi. 20.*

Page 748. THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO.

Line 1. *Pine.* "April 16. It was Mr. Theed who informed us of the pine tree." — H. C. ROBINSON.

Line 7. Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio the Pine tree as described in the Sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down. W. W.

Page 748. AT ROME — REGRETS, ETC.

Alluding to the fact that Niebuhr had cast doubt upon the legendary history of Rome.

Page 749. PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN.

Line 11.

Quem virum — lyra —  
 — simul celebrare Cho? W. W.

Page 750. FROM THE ALBAN HILLS.

Line 10. *twice exalted.* In her Augustan period, and again at the Italian Renaissance

Page 751. NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE.

This and the following sonnet allude to the defeat of Flaminius by Hannibal.

Line 7. *Rill.* Sanguinetto. W. W.

Page 751. THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA.

Line 29. *far-famed Pile.* Monastery of St. Francis.

On entering we were courteously received by the poor and humble monks. W. W.

Page 753. AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo (or Rinnwald, as our ancestors Saxonised the name), in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the *gentlemen* of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolised by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wider region of the forest. It comprehends between twenty and thirty distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had in the year 1831 fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about forty

years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d' Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been thirteen years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Scaramelli*, *San Giovanni della Croce*, *St. Dionysius the Areopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man. W. W.

Page 753. AT THE EREMITA OR UPPER CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

Line 1. *What aim had they, the Pair of Monks.* In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice that I saw among them no other figure at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in this or some other way, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate. W. W.

Page 753. AT VALLOMBROSA.

Milton visited Italy in 1638.

\*The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in 'Paradise Lost,' where this place is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the *natural* woods of the region of Vallombrosa are deciduous, and spread to a great extent; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees *planted* within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood; plots of which are periodically cut

down. The appearance of those narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being forced to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places." W. W.

1838

Page 761. "BLEST STATESMAN HE."

Line 14.

"All change is perilous, and all chance unsound."

W. W.

1839

This year Wordsworth received the degree of D. C. L. at Oxford.

Page 761. SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

These were occasioned by the general discussion in England in 1836-7 in regard to abolishing the death penalty in all cases excepting murder and treason. Wordsworth's ideals, while conservative, in many respects were in advance of his time.

In 1811 Wordsworth wrote to Sir Henry Taylor as follows: "You and Mr. Lockhart have been very kind in taking so much trouble about the sonnets. I have altered them as well as I could to meet your wishes, and trust that you will find them improved, as I am sure they are where I have adopted your own words."

1840

Page 764. SONNETS ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F.

This year is memorable from the fact that Miss Fenwick came to Rydal to live. To her interest in Wordsworth as poet and man we are indebted for the autobiographical notes prefixed to the poems of this volume. They were dictated to her by the poet and are known as the "Fenwick Notes." She once said to Sir Henry Taylor: "I would be content to be a servant in the house to hear his wisdom." It was natural that the first two sonnets of this year should be a tribute to Miss Fenwick. The lower terrace at Rydal was cut by the poet for her.

Page 765. POOR ROBIN.

The Poor Robin is the small wild geranium known by that name. W. W.

The hope expressed in the Fenwick note and the poem itself has been revered by those who have had the care of Rydal since Wordsworth left it; it has lost none of its beauty or charm.

Page 765. ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON.

Sept. 4, 1840, Haydon writes in his Journal, "I heard from dear Wordsworth with a glorious sonnet 'On the Duke and Copenhagen.'"

This picture used to hang on the staircase near the cuckoo clock at Rydal. See "On the Field of Waterloo."



1841

Page 766. TO A PAINTER.

Miss Margaret Gillies painted five portraits of Wordsworth on ivory. One of these was so pleasing to the family that it was reproduced with Mrs. Wordsworth at the poet's side. It is to her portrait that the two sonnets of this year refer.

Line 10. *that inward eye*. See "The Daffodils," note, and the other poems on Mrs. Wordsworth: "She was a Phantom of delight," "O dearer far than life and light are dear," "Let other bards of angels sing," "Such age how beautiful! O Lady bright," "What heavenly smiles! O Lady mine," "In trellised shed with clustering roses gay."

"In a letter of Wordsworth to his daughter (printed in the *Cornhill Magazine*, March, 1893) he writes of this and the following poem: 'Dearest Dora, Your mother tells me she shrinks from copies being spread of these sonnets: she does not wish one, at any rate, to be given to Miss Gillies, for that, without blame to Miss G., would be like advertising them. I assure you her modesty and humble-mindedness were so much shocked, that I doubt if she had more pleasure than pain from these compositions though I never poured out anything more from the heart.'" DOWDEN.

It is interesting to note that (in June, 1841) when Wordsworth was receiving honor at home and abroad for the great fight he had fought, Carlyle wrote a letter to Browning (just published), regarding "Sordello" and "Pippa Passes," in which he lays down the following distinctive doctrine for which Wordsworth had contended both in verse and prose. "Unless poetic faculty means a higher power of common understanding, I know not what it means. One must first take a *true* intellectual representation of a thing before any poetic interest that is true will supervene."

1842

This year Wordsworth was granted £300 for the Civil List for distinguished service in the cause of literature.

Page 766. "WHEN SEVERN'S SWEEPING FLOOD," ETC.

"The occasion of this sonnet was a bazaar held in Cardiff Castle to aid in building a new church on the site of one destroyed by floods two hundred years before." — KNIGHT.

Page 769. MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

SONNET I. *A Poet! — He hath put his heart to school*. In the first four verses of this sonnet Wordsworth reveals something of the method of the poets of the Restoration, who, as Keats says, taught that to write poetry was

"to smooth, inlay, and clip and fit.  
easy was the task,  
A hundred handicraftsmen wore the mask  
Of Poesy."

It was against such a perversion of art that Wordsworth did battle even to the last; he insisted that art was the product of the whole nature, intellect, sensibility, and will, aglow with a lofty spiritual imagination.

SONNET VII. *Men of the Western World*, etc. These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so intemperate. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTE

I am happy to add that this anticipation is already partly realised; and that the reproach addressed to the Pennsylvanians in the sonnet on page 781 is no longer applicable to them. I trust that those other States to which it may yet apply will soon follow the example now set them by Philadelphia, and redeem their credit with the world. — 1850. W. W.

Page 771. THE POET'S DREAM.

Line 28. *Chapel Oak of Allonville*. Among ancient trees there are few, I believe, at least in France, so worthy of attention as an Oak which may be seen in the "Pays de Caux," about a league from Yvetot, close to the church, and in the burial-ground of Allonville.

The height of this tree does not answer to its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height.

Such is the Oak of Allonville in its state of nature. The hand of Man, however, has endeavoured to impress upon it a character still more interesting, by adding a religious feeling to the respect which its age naturally inspires.

The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter, carefully wainscoted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble Sanctuary.

Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year, divine service is performed in this Chapel.

The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the leaves, like an ancient hermitage above the surrounding Wood.

Over the entrance to the Chapel an Inscription appears, which informs us it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville

in the year 1686; and over a door is another, dedicating it "To our Lady of Peace."

*Vide 14 No. Saturday Magazine. W. W.*

Page 774. AIREY-FORCE VALLEY.

Near Lyulph's Tower, Ullswater. See "The Sonambulist," note, and "I wandered lonely as a cloud." The Natural Trust for preserving places of historic interest in England has recently (1904) called for subscriptions that this section "of over 700 acres with one mile of frontage to the Lake, rights of fishing, and boating, the deer forest, the woods and the waterfall may be obtained as a natural possession."

Page 776. WANSFELL.

Wansfell, the Fell of Woden, lies to the southwest of Rydal above Ambleside.

1843

This year Wordsworth was appointed Poet Laureate.

Page 776. GRACE DARLING.

Grace Darling with her father, the lighthouse-keeper at Longstone on the Northumbrian coast, rescued nine survivors from the wreck of the steamship *Forfarshire*, Sept. 7, 1838.

Line 27. *Cuthbert's cell*. Cuthbert came from Melrose to Lindisfarne.

Page 778. "WHILE BEAMS OF ORIENT LIGHT SHOOT WIDE AND HIGH."

Line 2. *rural Town*. Ambleside.

Page 778. TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, D. D.

The poet's nephew.

Page 778. INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT.

This monument was erected in the Church of St. Kentigern, Crosthwaite, Keswick, in memory of Robert Southey. It stands on the east end of the altar tomb.

Lines 16, 17. *Buthe*, etc. These lines were changed by Wordsworth after they were cut on the monument. One can recognize this by running the fingers over them.

1844

Page 778. ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY.

The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the man advised him to fell for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the yeoman, "I had rather fall on my knees and worship it." It happens, I believe, that the intended railway would pass through this little property, and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters into the strength of the feeling. W. W.

Wordsworth sent this sonnet to Gladstone

with a letter calling his attention to the "deseccrating project."

That Wordsworth's spirit is still potent to save the Lakes for "Nature and Mankind," is evidenced by the work of the Lake District Defence Society, which has prevented the promoters from invading Borrowdale, Buttermere, and Braithwaite. In this good work it has had substantial aid from England, from across the Border, and from America. Many dalesmen may be found on the Lakes as loyal to its beauties as was that one referred to by the poet himself. So long as this feeling prevails Mr. Raskin's prophecy that there would in time be built "A railway for Cook's excursion trains up Scaw Fell, another up Helvellyn, and a third up Skiddaw with a circular tour to connect all three branches," will not become true.

Line 9. *Orrest-head*. The height north of Windermere, back of Elleray, the home of Christopher North, from which there is a magnificent view of Windermere and its surroundings.

Page 779. AT FURNESS ABBEY.

The tourist visiting the Lakes from the south should enter by Furness, where he will find the sentiment of the sonnet still splendidly realized. Furness is now the property of the Duke of Devonshire.

1845

Early in this year Wordsworth was summoned to attend a State Ball in London. He complied, and "wore Rogers' clothing, buckles, and stockings, and Davy's sword," says Haydon.

Page 779. "FORTH FROM A JUTTING RIDGE," ETC.

This rock may be easily found by turning to the left at the highest point of the middle road, "Bit-by-Bit Reform," on White Moss Common, as one goes from Rydal; or on the right of the coach road, "Radical Reform," not far from the "fir grove." They are now surrounded with thick shrubbery, but are "heath-clad" still.

Page 780. THE WESTMORELAND GIRL.

The scene of this poem is on the western side of Grasmere Lake, at the right of the road leading to Red Bank, where the brook descends from Silver How. The cottage known as Wyke Cottage still stands.

Page 784. "SO FAIR, SO SWEET."

The circumstance which gave rise to this poem was a walk in July, 1844, from Windermere, by Rydal and Grasmere, to Loughrigg Tarn, made by Wordsworth in company with J. C. Hare, Sir William Hamilton, Prof. Butler, and others. One of the party writes of it as follows:—

"When we reached the side of Loughrigg Tarn the loveliness of the scene arrested our steps

and fixed our gaze. When the Poet's eyes were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in search, to them a happy vital habit, for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. There his attention was arrested by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich's egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer inspection this proved to be the shadow of a daisy projected upon it. The Poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it, which so interested Professor Butler that he plucked the tiny flower, and, saying that 'it should be not only the theme but the memorial of the thought they had heard,' bestowed it somewhere for preservation." -- KNIGHT.

Ruskin says of the first six lines: "This is a little bit of good, downright, foreground painting and no mistake about it, daisy, and shade, and stone texture and all. Our painters must come to this before they have done their duty." — *Modern Painters*, vol. i. part ii., section ii., chapter vii.

Prof. Dowden thinks this was composed between 1835 and 1842.

1846

Page 786. "WHY SHOULD WE WEEP?" ETC.

This sonnet refers to the poet's grandson, who died in Rome, 1846.

Page 786. "WHERE LIES THE TRUTH?" ETC.

"This sonnet was occasioned by the death of the grandson alluded to in the previous sonnet; the illness of his brother Christopher, and of another grandson John, son of his brother Richard." — KNIGHT.

Page 787. TO LUCCA GIORDANO.

The picture which suggested this sonnet used

to hang on the staircase at Rydal. It was brought from Italy by the poet's eldest son.

1847

Page 788. ODE ON THE INSTALLATION OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS.

Wordsworth's beloved daughter Dora was taken ill early in this year, and when he was anxious over her condition he was requested to write the ode on the installation of the Prince Consort as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. He accepted the invitation, but was not able to complete the work, and was assisted by his nephew Christopher. Dora died in July and the poet wrote, "Our sorrow is for life, but God's will be done!" He never again retouched his larp.

"Wordsworth has laboured long; if for himself, yet more for men, and over all I trust for God. Will he ever be the bearer of evil thoughts to any mind? Glory is gathering round his later years on earth, and his later works especially indicate the spiritual ripening of his noble soul." — W. E. GLADSTONE. *Morley's Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 136.

Hon. George F. Hoar, reviewing Wordsworth's relation to righteousness and liberty as wrought out in the conduct of states, says: "The influence of William Wordsworth, — it is the greatest power for justice, and righteousness, and liberty, that has been on the planet since Milton. The knights, the good and brave champions of freedom, as they take upon their lips the vows of consecration, bathe themselves in Wordsworth as in a pure and clear fountain. The love of liberty under law, the loftiest political philosophy, snowy purity of life, sympathy with every human sorrow, breathe from every line Wordsworth ever wrote, until at the age of eighty the mighty power passed from the earth, and,

The man from God sent forth,  
Did yet again to God return."

*International Monthly*, October, 1900.

# THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORDSWORTH

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL LIST of the WRITINGS in VERSE and PROSE of WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, published from 1793 to 1903; arranged in Chronological Order.

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3

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The "Essay on Epitaphs" inserted in the Notes to this volume was originally published in *The Friend*, February 22, 1810. (T.)

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This is the first collected Edition (to date) of Wordsworth's Poems, excluding "The Excursion." In it the poet for the first time arranges the pieces under various headings, viz. "Poems referring to the Period of Childhood," "Juvenile Pieces," "Poems founded on the Affections," etc. (T.)

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"In these volumes will be found the whole of the Author's published poems, for the first time collected in a uniform edition, with several new pieces interspersed." — *Advertisement by the Author.*

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(In 1837 an American reprint of the poetical works of Wordsworth was published, edited by Professor Reed. It contained the poems issued in London in 5 vols. in 1827, and the contents of the Volume, "Yarrow Revisited," etc., published in 1835. It was a Royal 8vo double-column edition, and had a portrait from a painting by W. Boxall. After the Poet's death Professor Reed published a revised and complete Edition, which included not only the whole of the poems published by Wordsworth

in 1849-50, but "The Prelude," and one or two pieces which have never been included in any other collective Edition of his works.) (T.)

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This collective Edition of the Sonnets was reprinted, with an Essay on the History of the English Sonnet, by the late Archbishop Trench, in 1884. (T.)

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[About this date (1843) there was a selection from Wordsworth's Poems made by Henry Reed, and published by Leavitt and Co., New York.] (T.)

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[In 1854 Messrs. Little, Brown, and Co., of Boston, U. S. A., published an Edition of Wordsworth's Poetical Works in seven volumes, with a memoir (unsigned) by James Russell Lowell. This Edition was re-issued in 1880 in their series of "The British Poets."] (T.)

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This Edition was reprinted in 1870 (and called "The Centenary Edition"), in 1881, and in 1882, on thick crown 8vo paper. In this Edition the Fenwick notes to the poems (notes dictated by the poet to Miss Fenwick) are first printed, and form the prefatory notes to the poems explained.

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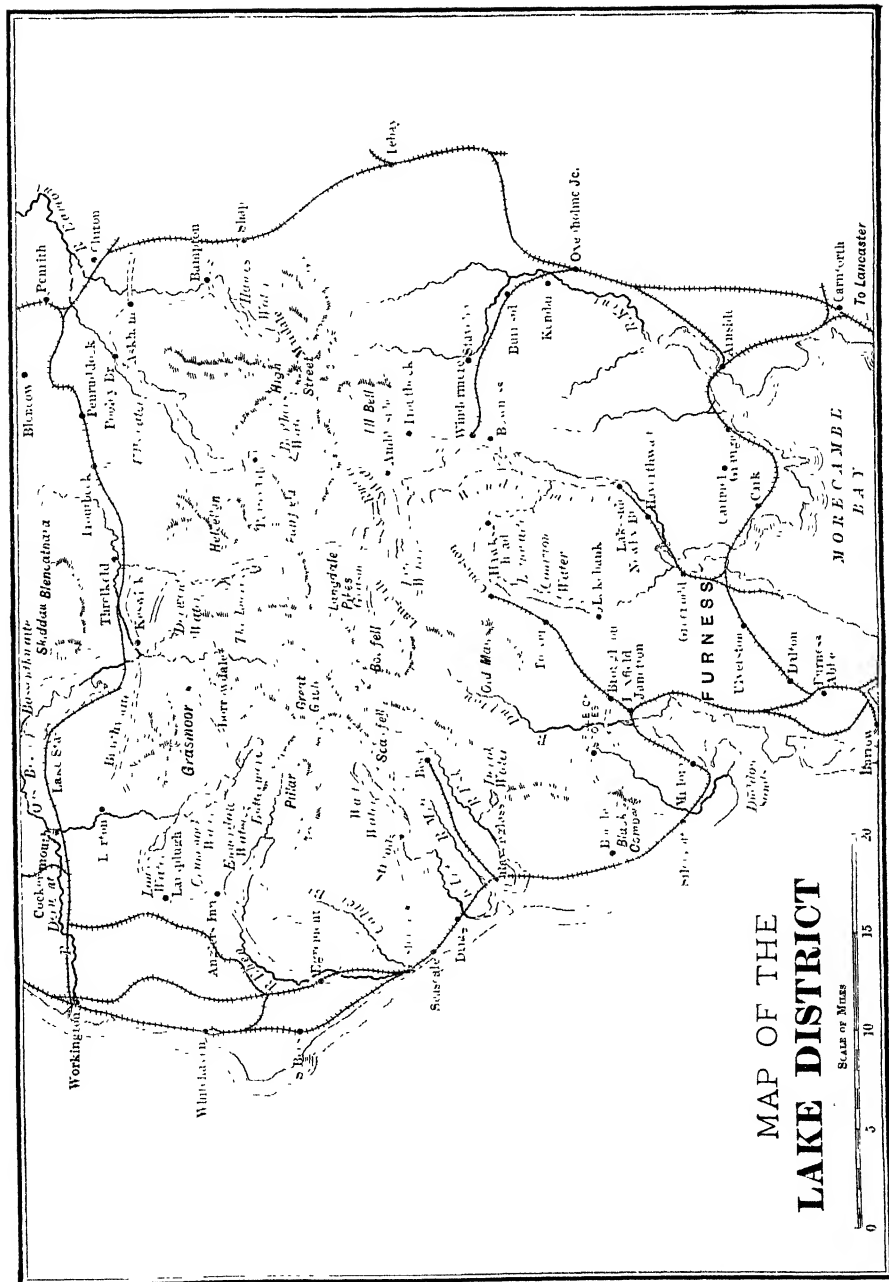


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"High bliss is only for a higher state," 647.

High deeds, O Germans, are to come from you,  
356.

High in the breathless hall the Minstrel sate,  
359.

High is our calling, Friend! — Creative Art,  
534.

High on a broad unfertile tract of forest-skirted  
Down, 771.

High on her speculative tower, 584.

His simple truths did Andrew glean, 252.

Holy and heavenly Spirits as they are, 622.

Homeward we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell,  
718.

Hope rules a land for ever green, 657.

Hope smiled when your nativity was cast, 717.

Hopes, what are they? — Beads of morning, 565.

How art thou named? In search of what  
strange land, 640.

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high,  
787.

How beautiful, when up a lofty height, 773.

How beautiful your presence, how benign, 609.

How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free,  
585.

How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright,  
538.

How disappeared he? Ask the newt and toad,  
602.

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled, 621.

How profitless the relics that we cull, 635.

How richly glows the water's breast, 9.

How rich that forehead's calm expanse, 638.

How sad a welcome! To each voyager, 717.

How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone,  
594.

How soon — alas! did Man, created pure, 613.

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks,  
348.

Humanity, delighting to behold, 549.

Hunger, and sultry heat, and nipping blast, 388.

I am not One who much or oft delight, 346.

I come, ye little noisy Crew, 114.

I dropped my pen; and listened to the Wind,  
382.

If from the public way you turn your steps,  
238.

If Life were slumber on a bed of down, 709.

If Nature, for a favourite child, 115.

If there be prophets on whose spirits rest, 605.

If these brief Records, by the Muses' art, 653.

If the whole weight of what we think and feel,  
650.

If this great world of joy and pain, 705.

If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,  
700.

If thou in the dear love of some one Friend,  
261.

If to Tradition faith be due, 695.

If with old love of you, dear Hills! I share,  
759.

I grieved for Bonaparté, with a vain, 282.

I hate that Andrew Jones; he'll breed, 259.

I have a boy of five years old, 74.

I heard (alas! 't was only in a dream), 571.

I heard a thousand blended notes, 81.

I know an aged Man constrained to dwell, 786.

I listen — but no faculty of mine, 581.

Imagination — ne'er before content, 544.

I marvel how Nature could ever find space, 260.

I met Louisa in the shade, 326.

Immured in Bothwell's towers, at times the  
Brave, 692.

In Bruges town is many a street, 663.

In days of yore how fortunately fared, 423.

In desultory walk through orchard grounds,  
767.

In distant countries have I been, 85.

In due observance of an ancient rite, 386.

Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood, 287.

Inmate of a mountain-dwelling, 556.

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud, 652.

In one of those excursions (may they ne'er, 216.

Intent on gathering wool from hedge and brake,  
766.

In these fair vales hath many a Tree, 682.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan, 80.

In this still place, remote from men, 298.

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay, 362.

Intrepid sons of Albion! not by you, 551.

In youth from rock to rock I went, 290.

I rose while yet the cattle, heat-oppressed, 600.

I saw a Mother's eye intensely bent, 629.

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk, 93.

I saw far off the dark top of a Pine, 748.

I saw the figure of a lovely Maid, 624.

Is *Drath*, when evil against good has fought,  
762.

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold, 294.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind, 284.

Is then no nook of English ground secure, 778.

Is then the final page before me spread, 591.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer, 386.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill, 748.

I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
601.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free, 285.

It is no Spirit who from Heaven hath flown,  
293.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood, 288.

It is the first mild day of March, 82.

I travelled among unknown men, 112.

— It seems a day, 111.

It was a beautiful and silent day, 194.

It was a dreary morning when the wheels, 138.

It was a *moral* end for which they fought, 384.

It was an April morning: fresh and clear, 247.

I've watched you now a full half-hour, 278.

I wandered lonely as a cloud, 311.

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile, 325.

I watch, and long have watched, with calm  
regret, 571.

I, who accompanied with faithful pace, 604.

Jesu! bless our slender Boat, 578.  
Jones! as from Calais southward you and I,  
285.

Just as those final words were penned, the sun  
broke out in power, 771.

Keep for the young the impassioned smile, 602.

Lady! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard, 731.

Lady! I rifled a Parnassian Cave, 571.

Lady! the songs of Spring were in the grove,  
358.

Lament! for Diocletian's fiery sword, 605.

Lance, shield, and sword relinquished -- at his  
side, 609.

Last night, without a voice, that Vision spake,  
324.

Let other bards of angels sing, 638.

Let thy wheel-barrow alone, 117.

Let us quit the leafy arbour, 560.

Lie here, without a record of thy worth, 322.

Life with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun,  
759.

Like a shipwrecked Sailor tost, 702.

List, the winds of March are blowing, 702.

List -- 't was the Cuckoo, -- O with what de-  
light, 751.

List, ye who pass by Lynlph's Tower, 722.

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape, 590.

Lone Flower hemmed in with snows, and white  
as they, 569.

Long-favoured England! be not thou misled,  
770.

Long has the dew been dried on tree and lawn,  
749.

Long time have human ignorance and guilt,  
207.

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat, 115.

Lonsdale! it were unworthy of a Guest, 721.

Look at the fate of summer flowers, 639.

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid,  
385.

Lord of the Vale! astounding Flood, 530.

Loud is the Vale! the Voice is up, 352.

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild, 392.

Lo! where she stands fixed in a saint-like  
trance, 770.

Lo! where the Moon along the sky, 758.

Lowther! in thy majestic Pile are seen, 721.

Lulled by the sound of pastoral bells, 589.

Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live,  
774.

Man's life is like a Sparrow, mighty King, 608.

Mark how the feathered tenants of the flood,  
401.

Mark the concentrated hazels that enclose, 540.

Meek Virgin Mother, more benign, 580.

Men of the Western World! in Fate's dark  
book, 770.

Men who have ceased to reverence, soon defy,  
623.

Mercy and Love have met thee on thy road,  
605.

Methinks that I could trip o'er heaviest soil,  
622.

Methinks that to some vacant hermitage, 609.

Methinks 't were no unprecedented feat, 599.

Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne, 351.

'Mid crowded obelisks and urns, 296.

Mid-noon is past; -- upon the sultry mead, 599.

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour,  
287.

Nine ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued,  
633.

*Miserrimus!* and neither name nor date, 669.

Monastic Domes! following my downward way,  
632.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes, 724.

Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrust, 619.

Motions and Means, on land and sea at war,  
721.

My frame hath often trembled with delight, 598.

My heart leaps up when I behold, 277.

Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree  
stands, 31.

Near Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove, 750.

Never enlivened with the liveliest ray, 783.

Next morning Troilus began to clear, 271.

No fiction was it of the antique age, 596.

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt, 695.

No mortal object did these eyes behold, 351.

No record tells of lance opposed to lance, 600.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby, 347.

Nor scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend,  
608.

Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject, 625.

Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid, 607.

Not a breath of air, 774.

Not envying Latian shades -- if yet they throw,  
533.

Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep, 601.

Not in the lucid intervals of life, 725.

Not in the mines beyond the western main, 723.

Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly, 578.

Not Love, not War, nor the tumultuous swell,  
638.

Not 'mid the world's vain objects that enslave,  
382.

Not sedentary all: there are who roam, 610.

Not seldom, clad in radiant vest, 566.

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance,  
596.

Not the whole warbling grove, in concert heard,  
651.

Not to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew, 715.

Not to the object specially designed, 762.

Not utterly unworthy to endure, 619.

Not without heavy grief of heart did He, 391.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,  
403.

Now that the farewell tear is dried, 583.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy, 303.

Now when the primrose makes a splendid show,  
765.

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room,  
346.

Oak of Guernica! Tree of holier power, 387.

O blithe New-comer! I have heard, 310.

O dearer far than light and life are dear, 638.

O'er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,  
384.

- O'erweening Statesmen have full long relied,  
 388.  
 O Flower of all that springs from gentle blood,  
 380.  
 Of mortal parents is the Hero born, 383.  
 O Friend! I know not which way I must look,  
 287.  
 Oft have I caught, upon a fitful breeze, 715.  
 Oft have I seen, ere Time had ploughed my  
 cheek, 649.  
 Oft have I heard of Lucy Gray, 118.  
 Oft is the medal faithful to its trust, 400.  
 Oft, through thy fair domains, illustrious peer,  
 410.  
 O for a dirge! But why complain, 641.  
 O for the help of Angels to complete, 577.  
 O gentle Sleep! do they belong to thee, 349.  
 O happy time of youthful lovers (thus, 327.  
 Oh, for a kindling touch from thy pure flame,  
 551.  
 Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy, 340.  
 Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze, 124.  
 Oh, what a Wreck! how changed in mien and  
 speech, 760.  
 Oh! what's the matter? what's the matter,  
 77.  
 O Life! without thy chequered scene, 579.  
 O Lord, our Lord! how wondrously (quoth  
 she), 263.  
 O mountain Stream! the Shepherd and his Cot,  
 597.  
 Once did She hold the gorgeous east in fee, 285.  
 Once I could hail (how'er serene the sky), 645.  
 Once in a lonely hamlet I sojourned, 276.  
 Once more the Church is seized with sudden  
 fear, 617.  
 Once on the top of Tynwald's formal mound,  
 714.  
 Once to the verge of yon steep barrier came,  
 222.  
 One might believe that natural miseries, 306.  
 One morning (raw it was and wet, 274.  
 One who was suffering tumult in his soul, 567.  
 On his morning rounds the Master, 321.  
 O Nightingale! thou surely art, 358.  
 On loitering Muse — the swift Stream chides us  
 — on, 546.  
 On Nature's invitation do we come, 123.  
 O now that the genius of Bewick were mine,  
 259.  
 On to Iona! — What can she afford, 717.  
 Open your gates, ye everlasting Piles, 634.  
 O thou who movest onward with a mind, 280.  
 O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought,  
 290.  
 Our bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine,  
 763.  
 Our walk was far among the ancient trees, 250.  
 Outstretching flame-ward his upbraided hand,  
 621.  
 Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies, 279,  
 Part fenced by man, part by a rugged steep,  
 688.  
 Pastor and Patriot! — at whose bidding rise,  
 708.  
 Patriots informed with Apostolic light, 627.  
 Pause, courteous Spirit! — Balbi supplicates,  
 301.  
 Pause, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be, 565.  
 Pelion and Ossa flourish side by side, 262.  
 People! your chains are severing link by link,  
 689.  
 Perhaps some needful service of the State, 389.  
 Pleasures newly found are sweet, 280.  
 Portentous change when History can appear,  
 769.  
 Praised be the Art whose subtle power could  
 stay, 399.  
 Praised be the Rivers, from their mountain  
 springs, 616.  
 Prejudged by foes determined not to spare, 624.  
 Presentiments! they judge not right, 682.  
 Prompt transformation works the novel Lore,  
 608.  
 Proud were ye, Mountains, when, in times of  
 old, 779.  
 Pure element of waters! wheresoe'er, 567.  
 Queen of the stars! so gentle, so benign, 733.  
 Ranging the heights of Scawfell or Black-  
 comb, 711.  
 Rapt above earth by power of one fair face,  
 756.  
 Realms quake by turns: proud Arbitress of  
 grace, 613.  
 Record we too, with just and faithful pen, 614.  
 Redoubted King, of courage leonine, 612.  
 Reluctant call it was; the rite delayed, 699.  
 Rest, rest, perturbed Earth, 546.  
 Return, Content! for fondly I pursued, 599.  
 Rise! they *have* risen; of brave Aneurin ask,  
 606.  
 Rotha, My Spiritual Child! this head was grey,  
 652.  
 Rude is this Edifice, and thou hast seen, 261.  
 Sacred Religion! mother of form and fear,  
 598.  
 Sad thoughts, avaunt! partake we their blithe  
 cheer, 599.  
 Said Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud, 740.  
 Say, what is Honour? — 'T is the finest sense,  
 385.  
 Say, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing hills,  
 688.  
 Scattering, like birds escaped the fowler's net,  
 622.  
 Scorn not the Sonnet: Critic, you have frowned,  
 650.  
 Screams round the Arch-druid's brow the sea-  
 mew — white, 605.  
 Seek who will delight in fable, 780.  
 See the Condemned alone within his cell, 764.  
 See what gay wildflowers deck this earth-built  
 Cot, 692.  
 See, where his difficult way that Old Man wins,  
 756.  
 Serene, and fitted to embrace, 527.  
 Serving no haughty Muse, my hands have here,  
 761.  
 Seven Daughters had Lord Archibald, 314.  
 Shade of Caractacus, if spirits love, 776.

Shame on this faithless heart! that could allow, 575.  
 She dwelt among the untrodden ways, 112.  
 She had a tall man's height or more, 275.  
 She was a Phantom of delight, 311.  
 Shout, for a mighty Victory is won, 308.  
 Show me the noblest Youth of present time, 654.  
 Shun not this Rite, neglected, yea abhorred, 631.  
 Since risen from ocean, ocean to defy, 714.  
 Six changeful years have vanished since I first, 169.  
 Six months to six years added he remained, 741.  
 Six thousand veterans practised in war's game, 308.  
 Small service is true service while it lasts, 731.  
 Smile of the Moon! — for so I name, 562.  
 So fair, so sweet, withall so sensitive, 784.  
 Soft as a cloud is yon blue ridge — the Mere, 726.  
 Sole listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played, 594.  
 Son of my buried Son, while thus thy hand, 760.  
 Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest, 398.  
 Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands, 317.  
 Stay, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy limbs, 402.  
 Stay, little cheerful Robin! stay, 768.  
 Stay near me — do not take thy flight, 276.  
 Stern Daughter of the Voice of God, 319.  
 Strange fits of passion have I known, 112.  
 Stranger! this hillock of mis-shapen stones, 261.  
 Stretched on the dying Mother's lap, lies dead, 720.  
 Such age how beautiful! O Lady bright, 652.  
 Such fruitless questions may not long beguile, 597.  
 Surprised by joy — impatient as the Wind, 541.  
 Sweet Flower! belike one day to have, 325.  
 Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower, 297.  
 Sweet is the holiness of Youth — so felt, 620.  
 Swiftly turn the murmuring wheel, 401.  
 Sylph was it? or a Bird more bright, 698.  
 Take, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take, 594.  
 Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense, 631.  
 Tell me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold, 639.  
 Tenderly do we feel by Nature's law, 762.  
 Thanks for the lessons of this Spot — fit school, 716.  
 That happy gleam of vernal eyes, 659.  
 That heresies should strike (if truth be scanned, 606.  
 That is work of waste and ruin, 279.  
 That way look, my Infant, lo, 316.  
 The Baptist might have been ordained to cry, 755.  
 The Bard — whose soul is meek as dawning day, 551.  
 The captive Bird was gone; — to cliff or moor, 715.  
 The cattle crowding round this beverage clear, 708.

The cock is crowing, 278.  
 The Crescent-moon, the Star of Love, 768.  
 The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair, 554.  
 The days are cold, the nights are long, 331.  
 The dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink, 246.  
 The embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine, 399.  
 The encircling ground in native turf arrayed, 633.  
 The fairest, brightest hues of ether fade, 539.  
 The feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn, 712.  
 The fields which with covetous spirit we sold, 313.  
 The floods are roused, and will not soon be weary, 720.  
 The forest huge of ancient Caledon, 693.  
 The formal World relaxes her cold chain, 764.  
 The gallant Youth, who may have gained, 686.  
 The gentlest Poet, with free thoughts endowed, 785.  
 The gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains, 294.  
 The God of Love — *ah, benedicite!* 266.  
 The imperial Consort of the Fairy-king, 568.  
 The imperial Stature, the colossal stride, 651.  
 The Kirk of Ulpha to the pilgrim's eye, 601.  
 The Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor, 253.  
 The Land we from our fathers had in trust, 383.  
 The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill, 726.  
 The leaves were fading when to Esthwaite's banks, 159.  
 The linnet's warble, sinking towards a close, 725.  
 — The little hedgerow birds, 96.  
 The lovely Nun (submissive, but more meek), 618.  
 The Lovers took within this ancient grove, 694.  
 The martial courage of a day is vain, 385.  
 The massy Ways, carried across these heights, 646.  
 The Minstrels played their Christmas tune, 593.  
 The most alluring clouds that mount the sky, 769.  
 The old inventive Poets, had they seen, 598.  
 The oppression of the tumult — wrath and scorn, 607.  
 The peace which others seek they find, 313.  
 The pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale, 507.  
 The pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute, 689.  
 The post-boy drove with fierce career, 274.  
 The power of Armies is a visible thing, 393.  
 The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed, 319.  
 There are no colours in the fairest sky, 625.  
 There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear, 306.  
 There is a change — and I am poor, 343.  
 There is a Flower, the lesser Celandine, 318.  
 There is a little unpretending Rill, 573.  
 There is an Eminence, — of these our hills, 249.  
 There is a pleasure in poetic pains, 650.

- There is a Thorn — it looks so old, 75.  
 There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale, 293.  
 There never breathed a man who, when his life,  
 389,  
 "There!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet  
 pride, 719.  
 There's (George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and  
 Reginald Shore, 258.  
 There's more in words than I can teach, 698.  
 There's not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
 689.  
 There's something in a flying horse, 97.  
 There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs,  
 111.  
 There was a roaring in the wind all night, 280.  
 There was a time when meadow, grove, and  
 stream, 353.  
 The Roman Consul doomed his sons to die, 761.  
 The Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal, 630.  
 The saintly Youth has ceased to rule, dis-  
 crowned, 621.  
 These times strike monied worldlings with dis-  
 may, 307.  
 These Tourists, Heaven preserve us! needs  
 must live, 232.  
 The Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo! 321.  
 The Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,  
 539.  
 — The sky is overcast, 71.  
 The soaring lark is blest as proud, 664.  
 The Spirit of Antiquity enshrined, 576.  
 The stars are mansions built by Nature's hand,  
 571.  
 The star which comes at close of day to shine,  
 764.  
 The struggling Rill insensibly is grown, 595.  
 The sun has long been set, 284.  
 The sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to rest,  
 705.  
 The Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire, 705.  
 The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields, 572.  
 The tears of man in various measure gush, 621.  
 The troop will be impatient; let us hie, 33.  
 The turbaned Race are poured in thickening  
 swarms, 612.  
 The unremitting voice of nightly streams, 787.  
 The Valley rings with mirth and joy, 244.  
 The Vested Priest before the Altar stands, 630.  
 The Virgin Mountain, wearing like a Queen,  
 623.  
 The Voice of Song from distant lands shall call,  
 286.  
 The wind is now thy organist; — a clank, 689.  
 The woman-hearted Confessor prepares, 611.  
 The world forsaken, all its busy cares, 753.  
 The world is too much with us, late and soon,  
 349.  
 They called Thee Merry England, in old time,  
 707.  
 They dreamt not of a perishable home, 634.  
 The Young-ones gathered in from hill and dale,  
 629.  
 They seek, are sought: to daily battle led, 393.  
 They — who have seen the noble Roman's scorn,  
 749.  
 This Height a ministering Angel might select,  
 402.  
 This Land of Rainbows spanning glens whose  
 walls, 690.  
 This Lawn, a carpet all alive, 668.  
 This Spot — at once unfolding sight so fair, 761.  
 Those breathing Tokens of your kind regard,  
 664.  
 Those had given earliest notice, as the lark,  
 616.  
 Those old credulities to nature dear, 748.  
 Those silver clouds collected round the sun, 571.  
 Those words were uttered as in pensive mood,  
 348.  
 Though I beheld at first with blank surprise,  
 766.  
 Though joy attend Thee orient at the birth,  
 692.  
 Though many suns have risen and set, 644.  
 Though narrow be that old Man's cares, and  
 near, 359.  
 Tho' searching damps and many an envious  
 flaw, 584.  
 Though the bold wings of Poesy affect, 785.  
 Though the torrents from their fountains, 257.  
 Though to give timely warning and deter, 763.  
 Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,  
 707.  
 Thou sacred Pile! whose turrets rise, 582.  
 Threats come which no submission may as-  
 suage, 618.  
 Three years she grew in sun and shower, 113.  
 Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,  
 610.  
 Thus all things lead to Charity, secured, 633.  
 Thus far, O Friend! have we, though leaving  
 much, 132.  
 Thus is the storm abated by the craft, 617.  
 Thy functions are ethereal, 660.  
 'Tis eight o'clock, — a clear March night, 86.  
 'Tis gone — with old belief and dream, 658.  
 'Tis He whose yester-evening's high disdain,  
 760.  
 'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,  
 309.  
 'Tis said, fantastic ocean doth unfold, 575.  
 'Tis said, that some have died for love, 256.  
 'Tis said that to brow of yon fair hill, 669.  
 'Tis spent — this burning day of June, 331.  
 To a good Man of most dear memory, 734.  
 To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield,  
 587.  
 To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking fen,  
 529.  
 To every Form of being is assigned, 515.  
 To kneeling Worshipers, no earthly floor, 631.  
 Too frail to keep the lofty vow, 295.  
 To public notice, with reluctance strong, 534.  
 Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men, 286.  
 Tradition, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw, 691.  
 Tranquillity! the sovereign aim wert thou, 720.  
 Troubled long with warring notions, 566.  
 True is it that Ambrosio Salinero, 390.  
 'Twas Summer, and the sun had mounted  
 high, 411.  
 Two Voices are there; one is of the sea, 356.  
 Under the shadow of a stately Pile, 755.  
 Ungrateful Country, if thou e'er forget, 626.

Unless to Peter's Chair the viewless wind, 613.  
Unquiet childhood here by special grace, 652.  
Untouched through all severity of cold, 700.  
Up, Timothy, up with your staff and away, 257.  
Up to the throne of God is borne, 727.  
Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books, 83.  
Up with me! up with me into the clouds, 320.  
Urged by Ambition, who with subtlest skill, 611.  
Uttered by whom, or how inspired — designed,  
578.

Vallombrosa! I longed in thy shadiest wood,  
586.

Vallombrosa — I longed in thy shadiest wood,  
751.

Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent, 307.

Wait, prithee, wait! this answer Lesbia threw,  
740.

Wanderer! that stoop'st so low, and com'st so  
near, 732.

Wansfell! this Household has a favoured lot,  
776.

Ward of the Law! — dread Shadow of a King,  
573.

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